

AN
ABRIDGEMENT
OF

Doctor Newton,
Late BISHOP of BRISTOL'S
DISSERTATIONS
ON THE
PROPHECIES

Containing chiefly those which relat
to POPERY.

Humbly dedicated and addressed to the Bishops and
Priests of the Roman Catholic Religion in the
Kingdom of Ireland.

Rev. ch. xviii. v. 4. "Come out of her my people, that ye be
not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her
plagues."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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DEDICATION

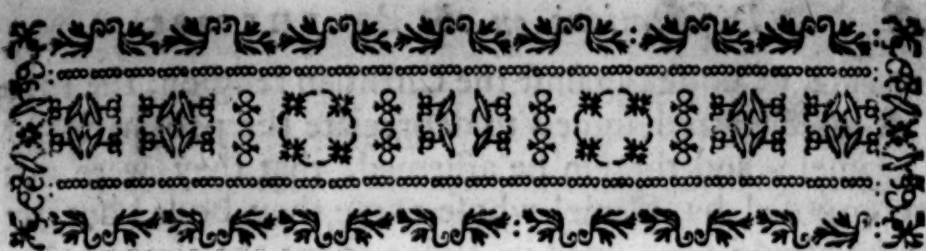
GENTLEMEN,

AS the DISSERTATIONS on the PROPHECIES were originally written by Dr. NEWTON, for the benefit and instruction of mankind in general, so they are now abridged solely for the service of you and your flocks. I have selected chiefly those relating to the origin, progress, and final dissolution of Popery; and offer them to you with my most sincere wishes, that they may prove of real service to you, and those under your spiritual guidance. In order to be acquainted with truth, it is necessary to have a love for it: I am sensible of the many difficulties you lie under to divest yourselves of the prejudices of an early education; but I know also, that many of you are men of sense and learning, and that every thing is to be hoped for from these qualities when properly made use of. I have the more to expect from your candour, from the behaviour of several who were formerly your most zealous advocates; but who, in searching the scriptures for arguments to de-

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send the doctrines they then professed, have been overcome by the glorious truths, which, in spite of their prejudices, broke in upon them: The following sheets, if properly attended to, will, I doubt not, have their due weight with you; and that you will then recommend them to the serious perusal of those under your care, allowing them full liberty to think for themselves; the consequence of which will be, that you *will all henceforth renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, commend yourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; for if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* I flatter myself you will think candidly of my intentions, who am, Gentlemen, with most sincere and ardent wishes for your REAL welfare, your obedient humble servant,

The EDITOR.



DISSERTATIONS ON THE PROPHECIES.

I.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S *dream of the great empires.*

IT pleased God to reveal unto the prophets the future condition of several of the neighbouring countries; but there are other prophecies which extend to more remote nations, those nations especially and their transactions, wherein the church of God was particularly interested and concerned. It pleased God too to make these revelations, at a time when his people seemed in other respects abandoned and forsaken, and did not so much deserve, as stand in need of light and comfort. Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied in the declension of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied during the time of the Babylonish captivity. And the prophecies of Daniel are so clear and exact, that in former as well as latter times it hath confidently been asserted, that they must have been written after the events, which they are pretended to foretel.

The famous Porphyry (who flourished at the latter end of the third century after Christ) was I think the first who denied their genuineness and authority. He

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wrote 15 books against the Christian religion, the 12th of which was designed to depreciate the prophecies of Daniel; and therein he affirmed, that they were not composed by Daniel whose name they bore, but by some body who lived in Judea about the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; because all to that time contained true history, but all beyond that were manifestly false. This work of Porphyry together with the answers of Eusebius, Apollinarius, and Methodius, is wholly lost, excepting a few fragments and quotations, which are preserved in Jerome and others of the fathers. But as Jerome rightly observes, this method of opposing the prophecies is the strongest testimony of their truth. For they were fulfilled with such exactness, that to infidels the prophet seemed not to have foretold things future, but to have related things past.

The celebrated author of *the Scheme of Literal Prophecy considered* hath followed the steps of Porphyry. He hath collected every thing, that in the course of his reading he thought could be turned to the disparagement of the book of Daniel. He hath framed all that he had collected into eleven objections against it; and upon the whole concludes with much positiveness and assurance, that it must have been written in the days of the Maccabees. But his two learned opponents, both of the same name, have solidly and clearly refuted his eleven objections, and shown them all to be mere cavils or direct falsities, groundless assertions, wrong quotations, or plain contradictions.

And indeed it may be proved, it hath been proved to a demonstration, as much as any thing of this nature can be proved to a demonstration, by all the characters and testimonies both internal and external, that the prophecies of Daniel were written at the time that the scripture says they were written, and he prospered on account of these prophecies (Dan. vi. 28.) in the reign of Darius the Mede, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian: that is between five and six hundred years before Christ. It is very capricious and unreasonable in unbelievers to object, as Collins doth,

to the prophecies of Daniel, sometimes that they are too plain, and sometimes that they are too obscure. But it will entirely overthrow the notion of their being written in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes or of the Maccabees, and will establish the credit of Daniel as a prophet beyond all contradiction, if it can be proved that there are several prophecies of his which have been fulfilled since the days of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees as well as before, nay that there are prophecies of his which are fulfilling in the world at this very time.

Daniel's first prophecy, and the ground-work as I may say of all the rest, was his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This monarch *in the second year of his reign* (Dan. ii. 1.) according to the Babylonian account, or the fourth according to the Jewish, that is in the second year of his reigning alone, or the fourth from his first reigning jointly with his father, having subdued all his enemies and firmly established his throne, was thinking *upon his bed*, (ver. 29.) *what should come to pass hereafter*, what should be the future success of his family and kingdom, and whether any or what families and kingdoms might arise after his own: and as our waking thoughts usually give some tincture to our dreams, he dreamed of something to the same purpose, which astonished him, but which he could not rightly understand. The dream affected him strongly at the time; but awaking in confusion, he had but an imperfect remembrance of it, he could not recollect all the particulars. He called therefore (ver. 2.) for *the magicians and astrologers*; and as absurdly as imperiously demanded of them (ver. 5.) upon pain of death and destruction, *to make known unto him both the dream and the interpretation thereof*. They answered very reasonably, that no king had ever required such a thing, that it transcended all the powers and faculties of man, God alone or only beings like God could disclose it; (ver. 10, 11.) *There is not a man upon earth that can show the king's matter; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler,*

ruler, that asked such things at any magician, astrologer, or Chaldaean: And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the Gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. But the pride of absolute power cannot hear any reason, or bear any controul; and the king greatly incensed presently ordered all the magicians and wise-men of Babylon to be destroyed; (ver. 12.) For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise-men of Babylon.

Daniel and his fellows would have been involved in the same fate as the rest; but by their joint and earnest prayers to the God of heaven, the secret was revealed unto Daniel in a night-vision; (ver. 19.) and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel thus instructed was desirous to save the lives of the wise-men of Babylon, who were unjustly condemned, as well as his own: and he went unto Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise-men of Babylon: he went (ver. 24.) and said thus unto him, Destroy not the wise-men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation. The captain of the guard immediately introduced him to the king, and said (ver. 25.) I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation. I have found a man said he, though Daniel had voluntarily offered himself; where Jerome remarks the manner of courtiers, *qui quum bona nunciant, sua videri volunt*, who when they relate good things, are willing to have them thought their own, and to have the merit ascribed to themselves. But Daniel was far from assuming any merit to himself, and said very modestly, that this secret (ver. 27.) which the wise-men, astrologers, magicians, and soothsayers could not show unto the king, was not revealed to him (ver. 30.) for any wisdom that he had more than others: but there is a God in heaven (ver. 28.) that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar, what shall be in the latter days;

or *what shall come to pass hereafter*, as it is expressed (ver. 29 & 45.) twice afterwards. The impious king, as Jerome justly observes, had a prophetic dream, that the Saint interpreting it, God might be glorified, and the captives and those who served God in captivity might receive great consolation. We read the same thing of Pharaoh, not that Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar deserved to see such things, but that Joseph and Daniel by interpreting them might be preferred to all others. And as St. Jerome farther observes, that Nebuchadnezzar might admire the grace of divine inspiration, Daniel not only told him what he saw in his dream, but also what he thought within himself before his dream. (ver. 29.) *As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind, upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets, maketh known unto thee what shall come to pass.*

Nebuchadnezzar's dream was of *a great image*. This great image, (ver. 31.) *whose brightness was excellent, stood before him, and the form thereof was terrible*. It appears from antient coins and medals that cities and people were often represented by figures of men and women. A great terrible human figure was therefore not an improper emblem of human power and dominion; and the various metals of which it was composed, not unfitly typify the various kingdoms which should arise. It consisted of four different metals, gold and silver and brass and iron mixed with clay; and these four metals, according to Daniel's own interpretation, mean so many kingdoms: and the order of their succession is clearly denoted by the order of the parts, the head and higher parts signifying the earlier times, and the lower the parts the later the times. These different kingdoms will naturally constitute the different heads of our discourse. And we shall follow the best commentators from Josephus down to Sir Isaac Newton, but we shall regard no commentator so much as the truth of history, the evidence of reason, and the analogy of scripture.

I. *This image's head was of fine gold, (ver. 32.)* which Daniel interprets (ver. 18.) *Thou art this head of gold, thou, and thy family, and thy representatives.* The *Babylonian* therefore was the first of these kingdoms; and it was fitly represented by *the head of fine gold*, on account of its great riches; and *Babylon* for the same reason was called by *Isaiah* (xiv. 4.) *the golden city.* The *Assyrian* is usually said to be the first of the four great empires; and the name may be allowed to pass, if it be not taken too strictly. For the *Assyrian* empire properly so called was dissolved before this time; the *Babylonian* was erected in its stead: but the *Babylonians* are sometimes called *Assyrians* in the best classic authors, *Herodotus*, *Xenophon*, *Strabo*, and others, as well as in the holy Scriptures. Daniel addresseth *Nebuchadnezzar*, as if he was a very powerful king, and his empire very large and extensive; (ver. 37 and 38.) *Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory: And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all.*

All the ancient eastern histories almost are lost: but there are some fragments even of heathen historians yet preserved, which speak of this mighty conqueror and his extended empire. *Berosus* in *Josephus* saith that he held in subjection *Egypt*, *Syria*, *Phœnicia*, *Arabia*, and by his exploits surpassed all the *Chaldeans* and *Babylonians* who reigned before him. *Josephus* subjoins, that in the archives of the *Phœnicians* there are written things consonant to those which are said by *Berosus* concerning this king of the *Babylonians*, that he subdued *Syria* and all *Phœnicia*: With these likewise agrees *Philostratus* in his history, and *Megasthenes* in the fourth book of his *Indian history*, throughout which he attempts to show, that the forementioned king of the *Babylonians* exceeded *Hercules* in fortitude and greatness of exploits; for he

affirms

affirms that he subdued the greatest part of Lybia and Spain. Strabo likewise from the same Megasthenes asserts, that this king among the Chaldæans was more celebrated than Hercules, and that he proceeded as far as to the pillars of Hercules, and led his army out of Spain into Thrace and Pontus. But his empire, though of great extent, was yet of no long duration; for it ended in his grandson Belshazzar, not 70 years after the delivery of this prophecy, nor above 23 years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar; which may be the reason of Daniel's speaking of him as the only king, *thou art this head of gold*, and *after thee shall arise*, &c. the rest being to be considered as nothing; nor do we read of any thing good or great that was performed by them.

II. *His breast and his arms of silver*, (ver. 32.) which Daniel interprets (ver. 39.) *And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee*. It is very well known, that the kingdom which arose after the Babylonian, was the Medo-Persian. The two hands and the shoulders, saith Josephus, signify that the empire of the Babylonians should be dissolved by two kings. The two kings were the kings of the Medes and Persians, whose powers were united under Cyrus, who was son of one of the kings and son-in-law of the other, and who besieged and took Babylon, put an end to that empire, and on its ruins erected the Medo-Persian, or the Persian as it is more usually called, the Persians having soon gained the ascendant over the Medes. This empire is said to be *inferior* as being *less* than the former, *minus te* as the Vulgar Latin translates it, because neither Cyrus nor any of his successors ever carried their arms into Africa or Spain so far as Nebuchadnezzar is reported to have done; or rather *inferior* as being *worse* than the former, *deterius te* as Castalio translates it, for Dr. Prideaux asserts, and I believe he may assert very truly, that the kings of Persia “were the worst race of men” that ever governed an empire.” This empire from its first establishment by Cyrus to the death of the last king Darius Codomannus lasted not much

above 200 years. Thus far all critics and commentators are agreed, that the two first kingdoms represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were the Babylonian and the Persian. As to the rest there hath been some controversy, but with little reason or foundation for it, only that some persons are troubled with the spirit of contradiction, and will dispute about the plainest points.

III. *His belly and his thighs of brass*, (ver. 32.) which Daniel interprets (ver. 39.) *And another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth*. It is universally known, that Alexander the great subverted the Persian empire. The kingdom therefore which succeeded to the Persian, was the Macedonian; and this kingdom was fitly represented by *brass*; for the Greeks were famous for their brazen armour, being frequently called by Homer, *the brazen-coated Greeks*. Daniel's interpretation in Josephus is, that another coming from the west, completely armed in brass, shall destroy the empire of the Medes and Persians. This third kingdom is also said to *bear rule over all the earth* by a figure usual in almost all authors. Alexander himself commanded that he should be called *the king of all the world*; not that he really conquered, or near conquered the whole world, but he had considerable dominions in Europe, Asia, and Africa, that is in all the three parts of the world then known; and Diodorus Siculus and other historians give an account of ambassadors coming from almost all the world to congratulate him upon his success, or to submit to his empire: and then especially, as Arian remarks, did Alexander himself appear to himself and to those about him to be *master both of all the earth and sea*.

That this third kingdom therefore was the Macedonian, every one allows, and must allow: but then it is controverted, whether this kingdom ended in the person of Alexander, or was continued in his successors. St. Jerome saith expressly, that the third kingdom signifies Alexander, and the kingdom of the Macedonians,

Macedonians, and of the successors of Alexander. It was a strange wild conceit in Grotius and others, to think that the kingdom of Alexander and of his successors made two different kingdoms.

The Seleucidæ who reigned in Syria, and the Lagidæ who reigned in Egypt, might be designed particularly by *the two thighs* of brass. Of all Alexander's successors they might be pointed out alone, because they alone had much connection with the Jewish church and nation. But their kingdom was no more a different kingdom from that of Alexander, than the parts differ from the whole. It was the same government still continued. They who governed were still Macedonians. The metal was the same, and the nation was the same: nor is the same nation ever represented by different metals, but the different metals always signify different nations. All antient authors too speak of the kingdom of Alexander and of his successors as one and the same kingdom. The thing is implied in the very name by which they are usually called, *the successors of Alexander*. Alexander being dead, saith Josephus, the empire was divided among his successors; he doth not say that so many new empires were erected. After the death of Alexander, saith Justin, the kingdoms of the east were divided among his successors: and he still denominates them Macedonians, and their empire the Macedonian; and reckons Alexander the same to the Macedonians, as Cyrus was to the Persians, and Romulus to the Romans. Grotius himself acknowledgeth, that even now the Hebrews call those kingdoms by one name *the kingdom of the Grecians*. There is one insuperable objection against the kingdoms of the Lagidæ and of the Seleucidæ being a different kingdom from that of Alexander, because if they are not considered as parts of Alexander's dominion, they cannot be counted as one kingdom, they constitute properly two separate and distinct kingdoms.

IV. *His legs of iron, his feet part of iron, and part of clay,* (ver. 33.) which is thus interpreted by Daniel
(ver.

(ver. 40, 41, 42, 43.) *And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron; the kingdom shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay; so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seeds of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.* Here are farther proofs that the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and of the Lagidæ cannot possibly be the fourth kingdom, because the marks and characters here given of the fourth kingdom by no means agree with either of those kingdoms. This fourth kingdom is described a stronger than the preceding. As iron breaketh and bruiseeth all other metals, so this breaketh and subdueth all the former kingdoms: but the kingdoms of the Lagidæ and of the Seleucidæ were so far from being stronger, that they were much weaker, and less than any of the former kingdoms. This kingdom too is represented as divided into ten toes: but when or where were the kingdoms of the Lagidæ and of the Seleucidæ divided into so many parts? Besides, the metal here is different, and consequently the nation should be different from the preceding. The four different metals must signify four different nations: and as the gold signified the Babylonians, and the silver the Persians, and the brass the Macedonians; so the iron cannot signify the Macedonians again, but must necessarily denote some other nation: and we will venture to say that there is not a nation upon earth, to which this description is applicable, but the Romans.

The Romans succeeded next to the Macedonians, and therefore in course were next to be mentioned.

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The Roman empire was stronger and larger than any of the preceding. The Romans brake in pieces, and subdued all the former kingdoms. As Josephus said, that the two arms of silver denoted the kings of the Medes and Persians; so we might say in like manner, that the two legs of iron signified the two Roman consuls. The iron was *mixed with miry clay*, and the Romans were defiled with a mixture of barbarous nations. The Roman empire was at length divided into ten lesser kingdoms, answering to the ten toes of the image, as we shall see hereafter. These kingdoms retained much of the old Roman strength, and manifested it upon several occasions, so that *the kingdom was partly strong and partly broken*. They mingled themselves with the seed of men; they made marriages and alliances one with another, as they continue to do at this day: but no hearty union ensued; reasons of state are stronger than the ties of blood, and interest will always avail more than affinity. The Roman empire therefore is represented in a double state, first with the strength of iron, conquering all before it, *his legs of iron*; and then weakened and divided by the mixture of barbarous nations, *his feet part of iron, and part of clay*. It subdued Syria, and made the kingdom of the Seleucidæ a Roman province in the * year 65 before Christ; it subdued Egypt, and made the kingdom of the Lagidæ a Roman province in the year 30 before Christ: and in the fourth century after Christ, it began to be torn in pieces by the incursions of the barbarous nations.

St. Jerome lived to see the incursions of the barbarous nations: and his comment is, that “the fourth kingdom, which plainly belongs to the Romans, is the iron that breaketh and subdueth all things; but his feet and toes are part of iron, and part of clay, which is most manifestly proved at this time: For as in the beginning nothing was stronger and harder than the Roman empire, so in the end of things

* See Usher, Prideaux, and other chronologers.

things nothing is weaker; since both in civil wars, and against divers nations, we want the assistance of other barbarous nations." He hath given the same interpretation in other parts of his works; and it seemeth that he had been blamed for it, as a reflection upon the government; and therefore he maketh this apology for himself. "If, saith he, in explaining the statue and the difference of his feet and toes, I have interpreted the iron and clay of the Roman kingdom, which the Scripture fortels should first be strong, and then weak, let them not impute it to me, but to the prophet: For we must not so flatter princes, as to neglect the verity of the holy scriptures, nor is a general disputation an injury to a single person."

All antient writers, both Jewish and Christian, agree with Jerome in explaining the fourth kingdom to be the Roman. Porphyry, who was a heathen, and an enemy to Christ, was the first who propagated the other opinion; which, though it hath been maintained since by some of the moderns, is yet not only destitute of the authority, but is even contrary to the authority of both scripture and history. It is a just observation of Mr. Mede, who was as able and consummate a judge as any in these matters: "The Roman empire to be the fourth kingdom of Daniel, was believed by the church of Israel both before and in our Saviour's time; received by the disciples of the apostles, and the whole Christian church for the first 300 years, without any known contradiction."

V. Besides this image, Nebuchadnezzar saw (ver. 34, 35.) *till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces: Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth:* Which is thus interpreted and explained by Daniel, (ver. 44, 45.) *And in the days of these kings shall*

shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever: Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold. They who maintain that the fourth kingdom was the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and of the Lagidæ, do, many of them, maintain likewise that this fifth kingdom was the Roman. But how can these characters agree with the Roman empire? How was the Roman empire *cut out of the mountain without hands*, or formed without human force and human policy? How was the Roman empire of *God's erection* more than any of the former kingdoms? How can the Roman empire which is *left to other people*, be said *not to be left to other people*, and how can that which is *broken to pieces*, be said to *stand for ever*?

This description can with propriety only be understood, as the antients understood it, of the kingdom of Christ. *And in the days of these kings*, that is in the days of some of them. *As in the days when the judges ruled* (Ruth i. 1.) signifies *in the days when some of the judges ruled*; so *in the days of these kings* signifies *in the days of some of these kingdoms*: and it must be during the days of the last of them, because they are reckoned *four* in succession, and consequently this must be the fifth kingdom. Accordingly the kingdom of Christ was set up during the days of the last of these kingdoms, that is the Roman. The *stone* was totally a different thing from the *image*, and the kingdom of Christ is totally different from the kingdoms of this world. *The stone was cut out of the mountain without hands*, as our heavenly body is said (2 Cor. v. 1.) to be *a building of God, an house not made with hands*; that is spiritual, as the phrase is used in other places, (Mar. xiv. 58. compared with John ii. 21. See also Coloss. ii. 11.) This the fathers generally apply to Christ himself, who was miracu-
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lously born of a virgin without the concurrence of a man : but it should rather be understood of the kingdom of Christ, which was formed out of the Roman empire, not by number of hands, or strength of armies, but without human means, and the virtue of second causes. This kingdom was *set up by the God of heaven* ; and from hence the phrase of *the kingdom of heaven* came to signify the kingdom of the Messiah ; and so it was used and understood by the Jews, and so it is applied by our Saviour in the New Testament. Other kingdoms were raised by human ambition and worldly power : but this was the work not of man but of God ; this was truly as it is called *the kingdom of heaven*, and (John xviii. 36.) *a kingdom not of this world* ; its laws, its powers were all divine. This kingdom was *never to be destroyed*, as the Babylonian, the Persian, and the Macedonian empires have been, and in great measure also the Roman. This kingdom was to *break in pieces and consume all the kingdoms*, to spread and enlarge itself, so that it should comprehend within itself all the former kingdoms. This kingdom was to *fill the whole earth*, to become universal, and to *stand for ever*.

As the fourth kingdom or the Roman empire was represented in a twofold state, first strong and flourishing *with legs of iron*, and then weakened and divided *with feet and toes part of iron and part of clay* ; so this fifth kingdom or the kingdom of Christ is described likewise in two states, which Mr. Mede rightly distinguisheth by the names of *regnum lapidis* the kingdom of the stone, and *regnum montis* the kingdom of the mountain ; the first when *the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands*, the second when it became itself *a mountain, and filled the whole earth*. The stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, the kingdom of Christ was first set up, while the Roman empire was in its full strength with *legs of iron*. The Roman empire was afterwards divided into ten lesser kingdoms, the remains of which are subsisting at present. The image is still standing upon his feet and

and toes of iron and clay; the kingdom of Christ is yet a *stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*: but the stone will one day smite the image upon the feet and toes, and destroy it utterly, and will itself *become a great mountain and fill the whole earth*: or in other words (Rev. xi. 15.) *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever*. We have therefore seen the kingdom of the *stone*, but we have not yet seen the kingdom of the *mountain*. Some parts of this prophecy still remain to be fulfilled: but the exact completion of the other parts will not suffer us to doubt of the accomplishment of the rest also in due season.

As we may presume to say that this is the only true and genuine interpretation of this passage, so likewise is it the most consonant to the sense of all antient writers, both Jews and Christians; and its antiquity will be a farther recommendation and confirmation of its truth. Jonathan Ben Uzziel, who made the Chaldee Targum or paraphrase upon the prophets, lived a little before our Saviour. He made no Chaldee version of Daniel, the greater part of this book being originally written in Chaldee, or his version is lost: but however he applies the prophecies of Daniel in his interpretation of other prophets. Thus in his paraphrase upon Habakuk he speaketh of the four great kingdoms of the earth, that they should in their turns be destroyed, and be succeeded by the kingdom of the Messiah. “For the kingdom of Babylon shall not continue, nor exercise dominion over Israel; the kings of Media shall be slain, and the strong men of Greece shall not prosper; the Romans shall be blotted out, nor collect tribute from Jerusalem. Therefore because of the sign and redemption which thou shalt accomplish for thy Christ and for the remnant of thy people, they who remain shall praise thee, &c.”

The sense of Josephus we will give in the words of Bishop Chandler together with his reflections upon it. “Josephus’s exposition of this text is so full in the
point,

point, that it ought not to be omitted. Josephus was born while Jesus Christ lived, and was, as he says, skillful in the knowledge of the sacred books of the prophets, being himself a priest, and the son of a priest, and exercised this way. Hear then the sense of that part of the dream we have been upon. Daniel foretold, that the second kingdom should be taken out of the way, by one who should come from the west clothed with brazen arms: and also that the strength of this (empire) another should put an end to, that should be like to iron, which from the nature of the mineral is superior to gold, silver, and brass. Daniel added his interpretation of the stone; but I don't think fit to relate that; my business being only to give a history of *past and newly done things*, not to write of *future things*. Yet if there be any one that is eager after truth, and will not give over inquiring, in order to learn these obscure events that are to come, let him carefully read the book itself, which he will find among our sacred (or canonical) books. Upon this passage observe, that the fourth empire is the Roman, in his judgment; because the third kingdom, which he begins in Alexander, was destroyed, not by the Greek generals, but by the Romans. Again, the fourth empire he reckons to be past, *i. e.* to be set up in the room of the Greek, and therefore he gives an historical explication of that, among the past events. But the kingdom of the *stone* being future, he refuses to touch on that. But he had a better reason than he gave: he feared to offend the power in being, whose protection he needed, and which he foresaw, must be offended, if he should publish the hope of his captive nation, one day to subdue their conquerors. We see however, in his excuse for stopping short, his sense of the prophecy that is yet unfulfilled, viz. that the kingdom of the God of heaven should break in pieces the Roman; and which he must consequently suppose will continue, till it gives place to the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah. And in this belief Christ confirmed the Jews, at the time he warned them of
their

their own excision. *The kingdom of God*, saith he, (Mat. xxii. 43, 44.) or all the advantages of the Messiah's coming, *shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. For whosoever shall fall against this stone* (as one of your prophets predicted, Is. viii. 14, 15.) *shall be broken: but, I add from another prophet* (Dan. ii. 34, 35.) *something more grievous for those that shall break you, on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. The kingdom of the stone shall bruise the Jews that stumbled at Christ's first coming; but the kingdom of the mountain, when manifested, shall beat the feet of the monarchical statue to dust, and leave no remains of the fourth monarchy in its last and degenerate state."*

The same notion was prevalent among the antient Christians, as well as among the Jews. St. Jerome and all the fathers, who have occasion to comment upon this passage, give the same interpretation: but we love not to multiply quotations; it will be sufficient to produce the testimonies of that eloquent preacher St. Chrysostom, and of that elegant historian Sulpicius Severus. St. Chrysostom is too copious to be quoted at large; we must content ourselves with some extracts out of him. "For what reason, saith he, does he call Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of gold, and that of the Persians of silver, and that of the Macedonians of brass, and that of the Romans of iron and clay? See the materials rightly disposed; for gold represents riches, &c; so likewise was that kingdom--- and it occupies the head, because it appeared the first. But that of the Persians was not so wealthy, as neither was that of the Macedonians: but that of the Romans was both more useful and stronger, and later in time, wherefore it occupies the place of the feet. But some parts of this kingdom are weak, and others are stronger.—*And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these*
kingdoms,

kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Bring hither to me the Jews. What will they say concerning this prophecy? for it is by no means right to say of any human kingdom, that it shall be everlasting or without end.—*In the days of those kings, to wit the Romans.* But if they say how can he break in pieces the gold, the kingdom of the Babylonians destroyed long ago? how the silver, the kingdom of the Persians? how the brass, the kingdom of the Macedonians? for these are past long ago, and are come to an end—how can he destroy kingdoms which are already destroyed? But to destroy others in which these are included, amounts to the same thing.”

Sulpicius Severus having given an account of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and of all the particulars relating to it, subjoins an exposition of it, agreeable to Daniel's interpretation. “The image is an emblem of the world. The golden head is the empire of the Chaldæans: forasmuch as that was the first and most wealthy. The breast and arms of silver signify the second kingdom: For Cyrus, the Chaldæans and Medes being overcome, transferred the empire to the Persians. In the brazen belly the third kingdom is declared to be portended; and that we see fulfilled: Forasmuch as the empire taken from the Persians Alexander vindicated to Macedonia. The iron legs are the fourth kingdom: and that is the Roman, the strongest of all ~~the~~ kingdoms before it. But the feet part of iron and part of clay, prefigure the Roman empire to be so divided as that it should never unite again: which is equally fulfilled—Forasmuch as the Roman territory is occupied by foreign nations or rebels:—and we see (saith he, and he lived at the beginning of the fifth century) barbarous nations mixed with our armies, cities, and provinces—But in the stone cut out without hands, which brake in pieces the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay, we have a figure of Christ. For he shall reduce this world, in which are the kingdoms of the earth, to nothing, and shall establish another everlasting kingdom.

Of

Of which alone the faith of some is still dubious, and they will not credit future things, when they are convinced of the past."

Nay Grotius himself, the great patron of the other opinion, that the fifth kingdom is the Roman empire, commenting upon those words (ver. 45.) *it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold*, cannot but acknowledge that the sublimer sense is, that Christ will put an end to all earthly empires, according to 1 Corinth. xv. 24. *that he shall put down all rule, and all authority, and power.*

Thus it pleased God to reveal unto Daniel, and by Daniel unto Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest and most signal events of this world. As Daniel said unto Nebuchadnezzar, (ver. 45.) *The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof is sure.* The king hearing his dream related with such exactness, might be better assured of the truth of the interpretation, and of the great events which should follow. And from hence we are enabled in some measure to account for Nebuchadnezzar's prophesying a little before he died. Abydenus wrote the history of the Assyrians. It is not well known in what age he lived, and his history is lost: but there is a fragment of it preserved by Eusebius, wherein it is asserted upon the authority of Megasthenes, that Nebuchadnezzar was divinely inspired, and prophesied in this manner: "I Nebuchadnezzar fortel unto you, O Babylonians, an imminent calamity, which neither Belus my progenitor, nor queen Beltis can persuade the fates to avert: A Persian mule shall come assisted by your demons, and impose servitude upon you; whose coadjutor shall be a Mede, the boast of the Assyrians." And soon after he died. Herodotus, who was a much older historian than Megasthenes, relates that a Delphic oracle was given to Cræsus king of Lydia, that when a mule should rule over the Medes, then he should not be ashamed to fly away. Which oracle was afterwards thus interpreted by the Pythian priests;

priestess ; Cyrus was the mule ; for he was born of parents of different nations, the mother the better, and the father the meaner ; for she was a Mede, and the daughter of the king of the Medes, but he was a Persian, and subject to the Medes. If any credit is to be given to these stories, if any such prophecies was uttered by Nebuchadnezzar a little before his death, if any such miracle was received and believed of Cyrus and the Persians subduing Asia, the notion, the tradition may very well be supposed to have been derived originally from this prophecy of Daniel, which being so solemnly delivered to a great king, and published in Chaldee, might come to be generally known in the east ; and the event soon afterwards evinced the truth of it.

It was from this prophecy too, that the distinction first arose of the four great empires of the world, which hath been followed by most historians and chronologers in their distribution of times. These four empires, as they are the subject of this prophecy, are likewise the subject of the most celebrated pens both in former and later ages. The histories of these empires are the best writ, and the most read of any ; they are the study of the learned, and the amusement of the polite ; they are of use both in schools, and in senates ; we learn them when we are young, and we forget them not when we are old ; from hence examples, instructions, laws and politics are derived for all ages ; and very little comparison is known of other times, or of other nations. Not but there have been empires as great or greater than some of these, as those of the Tartars for instance, and of the Saracens, and of the Turks ; and you may think perhaps, that they are as well deserving of a place in this succession of kingdoms, and were equally worthy to be made the objects of prophecy, being as eminent for the wisdom of their constitutions, the extent of their dominions, and the length of their duration. But these four empires had a particular relation to the church and people of God, who were subject to each of them in their turns. They were therefore

fore particularly predicted; and we have in them, without the intermixture of others, a line of prophecy (as I may say) extending from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to the full and complete establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah. He who is arbiter of kingdoms, and governor of the universe, can reveal as much of their future revolutions as he pleaseth: and he hath revealed enough to manifest his providence, and to confirm the truth of religion. What Daniel said upon the first discovery of these things, well may we say after the completion of so many particulars: (ver. 20, 21, 22.) *Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowlege to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

II.

DANIEL's vision of the same.

WHAT was revealed unto Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign concerning the four great empires of the world, was again revealed unto Daniel with some enlargements and additions in the first year of Belshazzar, that is about eight and forty years afterwards. But there is this difference, that what was exhibited to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a great image, was represented to Daniel in the shape of great wild beasts. The reason of which is ingeniously assigned by Grotius, and after him by Mr. Lowth, "that this image appeared with a glorious lustre in the imagination of Nebuchadnezzar, whose mind was wholly taken up with admiration of worldly pomp and splendor; whereas the same monarchies were represented to Daniel under the shape of fierce

and wild beasts, as being the great supporters of idolatry and tyranny in the world."

Daniel dreamed, and the angel interpreted. *These great beasts, which are four*, (says the angel, ver. 17.) *are four kings*, or kingdoms, as it is translated in the vulgar Latin, and the Greek, and Arabic versions, and as the angel himself explains it, (ver. 23.) *The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth.* They arise out of a stormy and tempestuous sea, that is out of the wars and commotions of the world: and they are called *great* in comparison of other lesser states and kingdoms, as they are denominated *beasts* for their tyrannical and cruel oppressions and depredations. These beasts are indeed monstrous productions; a lion with eagle's wings, a bear with three ribs in the mouth of it, a leopard with four wings and four heads, and a beast with ten horns: but such emblems and hieroglyphics were usual among the eastern nations; a winged lion and such like fictitious animals may still be seen in the † ruins of Persepolis; horns are attributed to beasts, which naturally have none; and these figures were, as I may say, the arms and symbols of such and such nations, and are no stranger than several which are still used in modern heraldry. We will consider them in order, and take notice only of such interpretations as carry in them something probable and plausible, to the end that we may establish what is more certain.

I. The first kingdom is represented by a beast, (ver. 4) *that was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: and I beheld till the wings thereof were pluckt, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.* This is the kingdom of the Babylonians: and the king of Babylon is in like manner compared to a lion by Jeremiah, (iv. 7.) *The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; and he is said to fly as an eagle, (xlviii. 40.) Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab;* and

† See Sir John Chardin and other travellers.

and he is also compared unto an eagle by Ezekiel, (xvii. 3, & 12.) *Thus saith the Lord God, A great eagle with great wings, &c.* The lion is esteemed the king of beasts, and the eagle the king of birds: and therefore the kingdom of Babylon, which is described as the first and noblest kingdom, and was the kingdom then in being, is said to partake of the nature of both. Instead of a *lion*, the vulgar Latin, and the Greek, and Arabic versions have a *lioness*; and it is Jerome's observation, that the kingdom of Babylon for its cruelty is compared not to a lion, but to a lioness, which naturalists say is the fiercest of the two.

The *eagle's wings* denote its swiftness and rapidity: and the conquests of Babylon were very rapid, that empire being advanced to the highth within a few years by a single person, by the conduct and arms of Nebuchadnezzar. It is farther said, *the wings thereof were pluckt, and it was lifted up from the earth*, that is, it was taken away from the earth, as it is commonly understood, and as it is translated in almost all the antient versions: or it may be rendered thus, *the wings thereof were pluckt wherewith it was lifted up from the earth*, as Grotius explains it, and as we read it in the margin of our bibles, the conjunction copulative sometimes supplying the place of a relative. Its wings were beginning to be pluckt at the time of the delivery of this prophecy; for at this time the Medes and Persians were incroaching upon it; Belshazzar the king now reigning was the last of his race; and in the seventeenth year of his reign Babylon was taken, and the kingdom was transferred to the Medes and Persians.

And it was made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. It was not easy to say what is the precise meaning of this passage. What appears most probable is, that after the Babylonian empire was subverted, the people became more humane and gentle; their minds were humbled with their fortune; and they who vaunted as if they had been gods, now felt themselves to be but men. *They*

were brought to such a sense as the Psalmist wisheth such persons to have, (Psal. ix. 20.) *Put them in fear, O Lord ; that the nations may know themselves to be but men.*

II. The second kingdom is represented (ver. 5.) by *another beast like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it : and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.* This is the kingdom of the Medes and Persians: and for their cruelty and greediness after blood they are compared to a *bear*, which is a most voracious and cruel animal.

And it raised up itself on one side, or as it is in the margin, *it raised up one dominion* ; for the Persians were subject to the Medes at the conquest of Babylon, but soon after raised up themselves above them. *And it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it* : these Jerome understands of the three kingdoms of the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, which were reduced into one kingdom ; and so likewise Vatablus and Grotius : but Sir Isaac Newton and Bishop Chandler with greater propriety explain them to signify the kingdoms of Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, which were conquered by it, but were not properly parts and members of its body. They might be called *ribs*, as the conquest of them much strengthened the Persian empire ; and they might be said to be *between the teeth of the bear*, as they were much grinded and oppressed by the Persians.

And they said thus unto it, Arise, and devour much flesh : this was said, as it was before observed, to denote the cruelty of the Medes and Persians. They are also represented very cruel by the prophet Isaiah, (xiii. 18.) *Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces, and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb ; their eye shall not spare children.* Cambyses, Ochus, and others of their princes were indeed more like bears than men. Instances of their cruelty abound in almost all the historians, who have written of their affairs, from Herodotus down to Ammianus Marcellinus,

linus, who describes them proud, cruel, exercising the power of life and death over slaves and obscure plebeians. They pull off the skins, says he, from men alive by pieces or all together : and they have abominable laws, by which for one man's offence all the neighbourhood is destroyed. Well therefore might a learned French commentator say, that the Persians have exercised the most severe, and the most cruel dominion that we know of. The punishments used among them beget horror in those who read of them.

III. The third kingdom is represented (ver. 6.) by *another beast like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads ; and dominion was given to it.* This is the kingdom of the Macedonians or Grecians, who under the command of Alexander the great overcame the Persians, and reigned next after them : and it is fitly compared to a *leopard* upon several accounts. The leopard is remarkable for swiftness ; *their horses* (saith the prophet Habakuk, i. 8.) *are swifter than the leopards :* and Alexander and the Macedonians were amazingly swift and rapid in their conquests. The leopard, as Bochart observes, is of small stature, but of great courage, so as to be afraid to engage with the lion and the largest beasts ; and so Alexander, a little king in comparison, of small stature too, and with a small army, dared to attack the king of kings, that is Darius, whose kingdom was extended from the *Ægean* sea to the Indies. Others have pursued the comparison farther, but with more subtilty than solidity ; for I conceive the principal point of likeness was designed between the swiftness and impetuosity of the one and the other.

For the same reason the beast *had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl.* The Babylonian empire was represented with *two* wings, but this is described with *four.* For, as Jerome saith, nothing was swifter than the victories of Alexander, who ran through all the countries, from Illyricum and the Adriatic sea to the Indian ocean and the river Ganges, not so much fighting

fighting as conquering, and in *six* years (he should have said in *twelve*) subjugated part of Europe, and all Asia to himself. *The beast had also four heads* : to denote the four kingdoms into which this same third kingdom should be divided, as it was divided into four kingdoms after the death of Alexander, his four captains Cassander reigning over Macedon and Greece, Lyfimachus over Thrace and Bythinia, Ptolemy over Egypt, and Seleucus over Syria. *And dominion was given to it* ; which sheweth, as Jerome saith, that it was not owing to the fortitude of Alexander, but proceeded from the will of the Lord. And indeed unless he had been directed, preserved, and assisted by the mighty power of God, how could Alexander with thirty thousand men have overcome Darius with six hundred thousand, and in so short a time have brought all the countries from Greece as far as to India into subjection ?

IV. The fourth kingdom is represented (ver. 7.) by a *fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly ; and it had great iron teeth : it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it, and it was divers from all the beasts that were before it.* Daniel was curious to know particularly what this might mean ; (ver. 19.) *Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was divers from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass, which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet.* And he was answered thus by the angel ; (ver. 23.) *The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be divers from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.* This fourth kingdom can be none other than the Roman empire ; for it is as absurd, as it is singular, to pretend to reckon the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ in Syria and of the Lagidæ or Ptolemies in Egypt as the fourth kingdom. Calmet himself acknowledgeth, that this is usually explained of the Roman empire ; and though for reasons of church,

as well as reasons of state, he may prefer the other hypothesis, yet it is “without pretending to destroy the system which understands the fourth empire of the Roman, and which as he confesseth, is the most commonly received among interpreters.”

The kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and of the Lagidæ can in no respect answer to this description of the fourth beast or kingdom. It is described as *dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly*: but the kingdom of the Lagidæ and of the Seleucidæ were *less* terrible, and *less* strong than any of the former kingdoms. It *devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue*, that is the remains of the former kingdoms, *with the feet of it*: but the Lagidæ and the Seleucidæ were almost continually at war with each other: and instead of subduing other kingdoms, tore to pieces their own. It was *divers from all kingdoms*, that is of a different nature and constitution of government: but Egypt and Syria were governed much in the same manner as the former kingdoms, and were equally absolute monarchies. Of the fourth kingdom it is said, *that it shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces*: but this can never be applied to the kings of Egypt and Syria, who were so far from enlarging their dominions, that they could not preserve what was left them by their ancestors.

Wherefore Jerome rightly concluded, that “the fourth empire which now possesseth the world, is the Roman, whereof it is said in the statue, *his legs of iron, his feet part of iron, and part of clay*; and yet he mentions now the iron in part, attesting that it had great iron teeth. And I greatly wonder, saith he, that when he had before placed a lion, and a bear, and a leopard in three kingdoms, he should compare the Roman empire to no beast: unless perhaps that he might make the beast more formidable, he concealed the name; so that whatever we could imagine the most fierce in beasts, that we should understand the Romans to be.” The fourth beast was so great and horrible,

horrible, that it was not easy to find an adequate name for it: and the Roman empire was *dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly*, beyond any of the former kingdoms. It was *divers from all kingdoms*, not only in its republican form of government, but likewise in strength and power, and greatness, length of duration, and extent of dominion. *It devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it*; it reduced Macedon into a Roman province * about 168 years, the kingdom of Pergamus about 133 years, Syria about 65 years, and Egypt about 30 years before Christ. And besides the remains of the Macedonian empire, it subdued many other provinces and kingdoms, so that it might by a very usual figure be said, to *devour the whole earth, and to tread it down, and break it in pieces*, and became in a manner what the Roman writers delighted to call it, *terrarum orbis imperium*, the empire of the whole world.

Dionysius Halicarnass, (a Greek writer, and a grave and judicious historian, who flourished in the reign of Augustus Cæsar) hath a remarkable passage, which is very pertinent to our present purpose. Speaking of the great superiority of the Roman empire to all former empires he saith, that the Persian was succeeded by the Macedonian, and the Macedonian by the Roman; so that he had no conception of Alexander's erecting one kingdom, and his successors another, but considered them both as one and the same kingdom. His words are, "The Macedonian empire having overturned the force of the Persians, in greatness indeed of dominion exceeded all the kingdoms which were before it: but yet it did not flourish a long time, but after the death of Alexander it began to grow worse and worse. For being immediately distracted into several principalities by his successors, and after them having strength to go on to the second or third generation, it was weakened by itself, and at last was destroyed by the Romans. And yet it did not reduce all the earth and sea to its obedience,

* See Usher, Prideaux, and other chronologers.

dience. For neither did it possess Africa, except that part adjoining to Egypt; neither did it subdue all Europe, but only northwards it proceeded as far as Thrace, and westwards it descended to the Adriatic sea. But the city of Rome ruleth over all the earth, as far as it is inhabited; and commands all the sea, not only that within the pillars of Hercules, but also the ocean, as far as it is navigable, having first and above all the most celebrated kingdoms, made the east and west the bounds of its empire; and its dominion hath continued not a short time, but longer than that of any other city or kingdom."

2. Another remarkable property of this beast is (ver. 7.) that *it had ten horns*: and according to the angel's interpretation (ver. 24.) *the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings* or kingdoms *that shall arise*. *Four kings* a little before (ver. 17.) signified *four kingdoms*: and so here *ten kings* are *ten kingdoms* according to the usual phraseology of scripture. And this is a farther argument, that the kingdoms of the Lagidæ and of the Seleucidæ cannot possibly be the fourth kingdom, because they were never divided into so many parts. The Macedonian empire was divided a few years after the death of Alexander into four kingdoms, whereof Egypt and Syria were two; but these two were never again subdivided into ten lesser kingdoms. Porphyry therefore, who made two separate kingdoms of the kingdom of Alexander and his successors, contrary to the received interpretation of *kings* for *kingdoms*, reckons down to Antiochus Epiphanes, whom he supposeth to be the *little horn*, ten kings who were most cruel: but these kings, as Jerome observes, were not all of one kingdom, of Macedonia for instance, or Syria, or Asia, or Egypt; but the list was made up out of the different kingdoms.

Grotius indeed, and Collins after him, form their catalogue of the ten kings, who were very oppressive and cruel to the Jews, out of the kings of Egypt and Syria: and they thus enumerate them, five out of one kingdom,

kingdom, and five out of the other, Ptolemy the son of Lagus, Seleucus Nicator, Ptolemy Eupator [I suppose he meant Ptolemy Philadelphus, for he reigned next after Ptolemy the son of Lagus, and next before Ptolemy Evergetes, being the son of the former, and the father of the latter] Ptolemy Evergetes, Seleucus Callinicus, Antiochus the great, Ptolemy Philopator, Ptolemy Epiphanes, Seleucus Philopator, and Antiochus Epiphanes. But it happens, that some of these kings did not persecute the Jews at all, as Seleucus Callinicus. Others were so far from persecuting them, that they were their patrons and protectors. Such were Ptolemy the son of Lagus, Seleucus Nicator, Ptolemy Philadelphus, Ptolemy Evergetes, and Antiochus the great: and such they are reckoned by Josephus himself. So that out of the ten kings only *four* were persecutors and oppressors of the Jews. The ten horns too are represented as existing all at once; they shoot out and appear upon the head of the beast all together: but these kings were not all contemporaries, many of them were successive, and one fell before another arose. So forced and arbitrary is this exposition, and so contrary to the truth of history.

We must therefore look for the ten kings or kingdoms, where only they can be found, amid the broken pieces of the Roman empire. The Roman empire, as the † Romanists themselves allow, was by means of the incursions of the northern nations, dismember'd into ten kingdoms: and Machiavel, little thinking what he was doing, (as Bishop Chandler observes) hath given us their names; 1. the Ostrogoths in Mœsia, 2. the Visigoths in Pannonia, 3. the Sueves and Alans in Gascoigne and Spain, 4. the Vandals in Africa, 5. the Franks in France, 6. the Burgundians in Burgundy, 7. the Heruli and Turingi in Italy, 8. the Saxons and Angles in Britain, 9. the Huns in Hungary, 10. the Lombards at first upon the Danube, afterwards in Italy.

Mr.

† Calmet upon Rev. xiii. 1. and he refers likewise to Berengaud, Bossuet, and Du Pin.

Mr. Mede, whom † a certain writer esteemed as a man divinely inspired for the interpretation of the prophecies, reckons up the ten kingdoms thus in the year 456, the year after Rome was sacked by Genseric king of the Vandals: 1. the Britons, 2. the Saxons in Britain, 3. the Franks, 4. the Burgundians in France, 5. the Visigoths in the south of France and part of Spain, 6. the Sueves and Alans in Gallicia and Portugal, 7. the Vandals in Africa, 8. the Alemans in Germany, 9. the Ostrogoths whom the Longobards succeeded, in Pannonia, and afterwards in Italy, 10. the Greeks in the residue of the empire.

That excellent chronologer Bishop Lloyd exhibits the following list of the ten kingdoms with the time of their rise: 1. Huns about A. D. 356. 2. Ostrogoths 377. 3. Visigoths 378. 4. Franks 407. 5. Vandals 407. 6. Sueves and Alans 407. 7. Burgundians 407. 8. Herules and Rugians 476. 9. Saxons 476. 10. Longobards began to reign in Hungary Anno Dom. 546, and were seated in the northern parts of Germany about the year 483.

Sir Isaac Newton enumerates them thus, 1. the kingdom of the Vandals and Alans in Spain and Africa, 2. the kingdom of the Suevians in Spain, 3. the kingdom of the Visigoths, 4. the kingdom of the Alans in Gallia, 5. the kingdom of the Burgundians, 6. the kingdom of the Franks, 7. the kingdom of the Britons, 8. the kingdom of the Huns, 9. the kingdom of the Lombards, 10. the kingdom of Ravenna.

The few variations in these accounts must be ascribed to the great disorder and confusion of the times, one kingdom falling, and another rising, and scarce any subsisting for a long while together. As a learned § writer remarks, "All these kingdoms were variously divided either by conquest or inheritance. However, as if that number of *ten* had been fatal in the Roman dominions, it hath been taken notice of upon particular

† Mons. Jurieu, in the Preface to his accomplishment of the Scripture prophecies.

§ Daubuz on Rev. xiii. 1. p. 556.

particular occasions. As about A. 1240 by Eberard bishop of Saltzburg in the diet at Ratisbon. At the time of the Reformation they were also ten. So that the Roman empire was divided into *ten* in a manner, first and last." Mr. Whiston, who published his essay on the Revelation of St. John in the year 1706, farther observes, "that as the number of the kingdoms, into which the Roman empire in Europe, agreeably to the antient prophecies, was originally divided A. D. 456, was exactly *ten*: so it is also very nearly returned again to the same condition; and at present is divided into ten grand or principal kingdoms or states.---For though there are many more great kingdoms and dominions in Europe besides, yet are they out of the bounds of the old Roman empire, and so not so directly within our present inquiry."

We would, for reasons which will hereafter appear to the attentive reader, fix these ten kingdoms at a different æra from any of the foregoing; and let us see how they stood in the eighth century. The principal states and governments then were 1. of the senate of Rome, who revolted from the Greek emperors, and claimed and exerted the privilege of choosing a new western emperor; 2. of the Greeks in Ravenna; 3. of the Lombards in Lombardy; 4. of the Huns in Hungary; 5. of the Alemanes in Germany; 6. of the Franks in France; 7. of the Burgundians in Burgundy; 8. of the Goths in Spain; 9. of the Britons; 10. of the Saxons in Britain. Not that there were constantly *ten* kingdoms; they were sometimes more, and sometimes fewer: but, as Sir Isaac Newton says, "whatever was their number afterwards, they are still called the *ten kings* from their first number."

3. Besides these ten horns or kingdoms of the fourth empire, there was to spring up among them another little horn. *I considered the horns*, saith Daniel, (ver. 8.) *and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns pluckt up by the roots.* Daniel was eager to know (ver. 20.) *as of the ten horns*, so likewise of the
other

other which came up, and before whom three fell. And he was informed by the angel, (ver. 24.) that as *the ten horns out of this kingdom were ten kings, or kingdoms that should arise, so likewise that another shall arise after them, and he shall subdue three kings or kingdoms.* One absurdity generally produceth another: and Grotius, in consequence of his former supposition that the fourth kingdom was the kingdoms of the Seleucidæ and the Lagidæ, supposeth also, that *the little horn* was Antiochus Epiphanes, and that *the three horns which were pluckt up before him* were his elder brother Seleucus, and Demetrius the son of Seleucus, and Ptolemy Philopator king of Egypt: and Collins adopts the same notion after Grotius, for Collins was only a retailer of scraps, and could not advance any thing of this kind of his own. But surely it is very arbitrary to reckon Antiochus Epiphanes as one of the ten horns, and at the same time as the little horn, when the prophet hath plainly made the little horn an *eleventh* horn, distinct from the former ten. There were *three of the first horns* to be pluckt up by the roots before the little horn; but the three kings mentioned by Grotius are not all in his first catalogue of ten kings, neither Ptolemy Philometor (if Philometor be meant) nor Demetrius being of the number. Neither were they *pluckt up by the roots* by Antiochus, or by his order. Seleucus was poisoned by his treasurer Heliodorus, whose aim it was to usurp the crown to himself, before Antiochus returned from Rome, where he had been detained a hostage several years. Demetrius lived to dethrone and murder the son of Antiochus, and succeeded him in the kingdom of Syria: Ptolemy Philopator died king of Egypt almost thirty years before Antiochus came to the throne of Syria: or if Ptolemy Philometor (as is most probable) was meant by Grotius, Philometor, though he suffered much in his wars with Antiochus, yet survived him about eighteen years, and died in possession of the crown of Egypt, after the family of Antiochus had been set aside from the succession to the crown of

Syria. Neither doth Antiochus Epiphanes answer to the character of the little horn in other respects, and particularly in this. The little horn continues (ver. 21, 22, 26.) to reign till the second coming of Christ in glory; but Antiochus Epiphanes died about 164 years before his first coming in the flesh. These are all farther arguments to prove, that the *fourth beast* must needs signify the Roman empire, and that *the ten horns* represent the ten kingdoms into which that empire was divided, and therefore we must look for *the little horn* among them, and no where else: and that we may not be led away by modern prejudices, let us see whether the antients will not afford us some light and direction.

Irenæus, a father who flourished in the second century, treating of the fraud, pride, and tyranny of Antichrist, asserts that Daniel respecting the “end of the last kingdom, that is, the last ten kings, among whom that kingdom should be divided, upon whom the son of perdition shall come, saith that ten horns shall grow on the beast, and another little horn shall grow up among them, and three of the first horns shall be rooted out before him. Of whom also Paul the apostle speaketh in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, calling him *the son of perdition*, and *the wicked one*. St. John, our Lord’s disciple, hath in the Apocalyps still more plainly signified of the last time, and of these ten kings, among whom the empire that now reigneth shall be divided, explaining what the ten horns shall be, which were seen by Daniel.”

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who flourished about the middle of the fourth century, speaking of Antichrist’s coming in the latter times of the Roman empire, saith “We teach these things not of our own invention, but having learned them out of the divine scriptures, and especially out of the prophecy of Daniel which was just now read; even as Gabriel the archangel interpreted saying thus; *the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall exceed all the kingdoms*: but that this is the empire of the Romans, ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical interpreters have delivered. For the first that was made famous, was the kingdom of the Assyrians; and the second, was that of the Medes and Persians together; and after these the third, was that of the Macedonians; and the fourth kingdom, is now that of the Romans. Afterwards Gabriel interpreting saith, *Its ten horns are ten kings that shall arise; and after them shall arise another king, who shall exceed in wickedness all before him; not only the ten he saith, but also all who were before him. And he shall depress three kings:* but it is manifest that of the first ten he shall depress three, that he himself may reign the eighth: and he shall speak words, saith he, against the most high."

St. Jerome having refuted Porphyry's notion of Antiochus Epiphanes being the little horn, (where by the way the passage appears to want much emendation) concludes thus; "Therefore let us say what all ecclesiastical writers have delivered, that in the latter days, when the empire of the Romans shall be destroyed, there will be ten kings, who shall divide it between them, and an eleventh shall arise, a little king, who shall subdue three of the ten kings, and the other seven shall submit their necks to the conqueror." Theodoret speaketh much to the same purpose in his comment upon Daniel: and St. Austin expressly approveth of Jerome's interpretation. "Those four kingdoms, saith he, some have expounded to be the Assyrian, Persian, Macedonian and Roman. How properly they have done that, those who are desirous of knowing, may read the presbyter Jerome's book upon Daniel, which is very accurately and learnedly written."

The fathers, it appears by these instances, conceived that the fourth empire was the Roman, that the Roman empire was to be divided between ten kings, and that among them would arise Antichrist, who should root up three of the ten kings, and domineer over the other seven. At the same time it must be confessed that these same fathers entertained strange

wild notions concerning this Antichrist, that he should be a Jew, that he should descend from the tribe of Dan, that he should come from Babylon, that he should fix his residence in the temple at Jerusalem, that he should first subdue Egypt, and afterwards Lybia and Ethiopia, which were the three horns that should fall before him. But it is no wonder that the fathers, nor indeed that any one should mistake in particularly applying prophecies, which had not then received their completion. The fathers might understand the prophecies so far as they were fulfilled, and might say with certainty which were the four great kingdoms of the world, that the fourth was the Roman, and that the Roman would be divided in the manner that Daniel had foretold. So far was plain and obvious, and so far they might proceed with safety: but when they ventured farther, and would define particularly who were the ten kings, and who was Antichrist, and who were the three kings that should fall before him, then they plunged out of their depth, and were lost in the abyss of error. Such prophecies can be explained only by the events, and these events were yet in the womb of time. Some other mistaken prophecies might lead the fathers into this interpretation. There is not the least foundation for it in this prophecy. On the contrary this prophecy might have instructed them better, and have taught them that as the western empire was to be divided into ten kingdoms, so the little horn should arise among them, and subdue three of them: and consequently the little horn could not arise in the east, he could not be a Jew, he could not come from Babylon, and neither could Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia be the three kingdoms which should fall before him.

Antichrist then (as the fathers delight to call him) or the little horn is to be sought among the ten kingdoms of the western Roman empire. I say of the western Roman empire, because that was properly the body of the fourth beast; Greece and the countries which lay eastward of Italy belonged to the third beast; for the former

mer beasts were still subsisting, though their dominion was taken away. *As concerning the rest of the beasts, saith Daniel (ver. 12.) they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.* “And therefore, as Sir Isaac Newton rightly infers, all the four beasts are still alive, tho’ the dominion of the three first be taken away. The nations of Chaldæa and Assyria are still the first beast. Those of Media and Persia are still the second beast. Those of Macedon, Greece and Thrace, Asia minor, Syria and Egypt, are still the third. And those of Europe, on this side Greece, are still the fourth. Seeing therefore the body of the third beast is confined to the nations on this side the river Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast is confined to the nations on this side Greece; we are to look for all the four heads of the third beast, among the nations on this side the river Euphrates; and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast, among the nations on this side of Greece. And therefore, at the breaking of the Greek empire into four kingdoms of the Greeks, we include no part of the Chaldæans, Medes and Persians in those kingdoms, because they belonged to the bodies of the two first beasts. Nor do we reckon the Greek empire seated at Constantinople, among the horns of the fourth beast, because it belonged to the body of the third.” For the same reason, neither can the Saracen nor the Turk be the little horn or Antichrist, as some have imagined them to be; and neither do they come up to the character in other respects.

Let us therefore look for the little horn, as the prophecy itself directs us, among the other ten horns of the western Roman empire. If indeed it be true, as the Romanists pretend, that this part of the prophecy is not yet fulfilled, and that Antichrist will come only for a little time before the general judgment, it would be in vain to inquire who or what he is; we should split upon the same rock as the fathers have done; it would better become us to say with Calmer, that, “as the reign of Antichrist is still re-

mote, we cannot show the accomplishment of the prophecies with regard to him ; we ought to content ourselves with considering the past, and comparing it with the words of the prophet ; the past is an assurance of the future." But perhaps upon examination we shall see reason to conclude with the generality of the protestants, that this part of the prophecy is fulfilled. We have seen already that the Roman empire was divided into ten horns or kingdoms, and among them possibly we may find another little horn or kingdom answering in all respects to the character here given. Machiavel himself will lead us by the hand ; for having shown how the Roman empire was broken and divided by the incursions of the northern nations, he says " About this time the bishops of Rome began to take upon them, and to exercise greater authority than they had formerly done. At first the successors of St. Peter were venerable and eminent for their miracles, and the holiness of their lives ; and their examples added daily such numbers to the christian church, that to obviate or remove the confusions which were then in the world, many princes turned Christians, and the emperor of Rome being converted among the rest, and quitting Rome, to hold his residence at Constantinople ; the Roman empire (as we have said before) began to decline, but the church of Rome augmented as fast." And so he proceeds to give an account, how the Roman empire declined, and the power of the church of Rome increased, first under the Goths, then under the Lombards, and afterwards by the calling in of the Franks.

Here then is a little horn springing up among the other ten horns. The bishop of Rome was respectable as a bishop long before, but he did not become a *horn* properly, (which is an emblem of strength and power) till he became a temporal prince. He was to *rise after* the others, that is *behind them* ; so that the ten kings were not aware of the growing up of the little horn, till it overtopped them ; the word in the original signifying as well *behind* in place, as *after* in time ;

time; as *post* in Latin is used indifferently either of place or time. *Three of the first horns*, that is three of the first kings or kingdoms, were to be *pluckt up by the roots*, and to *fall before him*. And these three, according to Mr. Mede, were those whose dominions extended into Italy, and so stood in his light: first, that of the *Greeks*, whose emperor Leo Isaurus, for the quarrel of image-worship, he excommunicated, and made his subjects of Italy revolt from their allegiance: secondly, that of the *Longobards* (successors to the Ostrogoths) whose kingdom he caused by the aid of the Franks to be wholly ruined and extirpated, thereby to get the exarchate of Ravenna (which since the revolt from the Greeks the Longobards were seized on) for a patrimony to St. Peter: thirdly, the last was the kingdom of the Franks itself, continued in the empire of Germany; whose emperors from the days of Henry the fourth he excommunicated, deposed and trampled under his feet, and never suffered to live in rest, till he made them not only to quit their interest in the election of popes and investitures of bishops, but that remainder also of jurisdiction of Italy, wherewith together with the Roman name he had once infeoffed their predecessors. These were the kings by displanting or (as the Vulgar hath) *bumbling* of whom the pope got elbow-room by degrees, and advanced himself to that highth of temporal majesty and absolute greatness, which made him so terrible in the world."

Sir Isaac Newton reckons them up with some variation. "Kings, saith he, are put for kingdoms, as above; and therefore the little horn is a little kingdom. It was a horn of the fourth beast, and rooted up three of his first horns; and therefore we are to look for it among the nations of the Latin empire, after the rise of the ten horns.—In the eighth century, by rooting up and subduing the exarchate of *Ravenna*, the kingdom of the *Lombards*, and the senate and dukedom of *Rome*, he acquired Peter's patrimony out of their dominions; and thereby rose up

as a temporal prince or king, or horn of the fourth beast." Again. "It was certainly by the victory of the see of Rome over the *Greek* emperor, the king of *Lombardy*, and the senate of *Rome*, that she acquired Peter's patrimony, and rose up to her greatness."

In both these schemes there is something to be approved, and something perhaps to be disapproved. In Mr. Mede's plan it is to be approved, that the three kingdoms which he proposeth, are mentioned in his first table of the ten kingdoms: but then it may be questioned, whether the kingdom of the Franks or Germans in Italy can be said properly to have been *pluckt up by the roots* through the power or policy of the popes. There were indeed long struggles and contests between the popes and emperors: but did the pope ever so totally prevail over the emperors, as to *extirpate* and *eradicate* them out of Italy, (for so the original word signifies) and to seize and annex their dominions to his own? In Sir Isaac Newton's plan it is to be approved, that the three kingdoms which he proposeth, were *pluckt up by the roots*, were totally subdued by the popes, and possessed as parts of Peter's patrimony: but then it may be objected, that only two of the three are mentioned in his first catalogue of the ten kingdoms, the senate and dukedom of Rome being not included in the number. There were not only *three horns* to be pluckt up before the little horn, but *three of the first horns*. We have therefore exhibited a catalogue of the ten kingdoms, as they stood in the eighth century; and therein are comprehended the three states or kingdoms, which constituted the pope's dominions, and which we conceive to be the same as Sir Isaac Newton did, the *exarchate* of *Ravenna*, the *kingdom* of the *Lombards*, and the *state* of *Rome*.

First, the *exarchate* of *Ravenna*, which of right belonged to the Greek emperors, and was the capital of their dominions in Italy, having revolted at the instigation of the pope, was unjustly seized by Aistulphus

phus king of the Lombards, who thereupon thought of making himself master of Italy. The pope in this exigency applied for help to Pipin king of France, who marched into Italy, besieged the Lombards in Pavia, and forced them to surrender the exarchate and other territories, which were not restored to the Greek emperor as in justice they ought to have been, but at the solicitation of the pope were given to St. Peter and his successors for a perpetual succession. Pope Zachary had acknowledged Pipin, usurper of the crown of France, as lawful sovereign; and now Pipin in his turn bestowed a principality, which was another's property, upon pope Stephen II. the successor of Zachary. "And so, as Platina says, the name of the exarchate, which had continued from the time of Narses to the taking of Ravenna by Aistulphus an hundred and seventy years, was extinguished." This was effected in the year 755 according to Sigonius. And henceforward the popes, being now become temporal princes, did no longer date their epistles and bulls by the years of the emperors reign, but by the years of their own advancement to the papal chair.

Secondly, the *kingdom* of the *Lombards* was often troublesome to the popes: and now again king Desiderius invaded the territories of pope Adrian I. So that the pope was obliged to have recourse again to the king of France, and earnestly invited Charles the great, the son and successor of Pipin, to come into Italy to his assistance. He came accordingly with a great army, being ambitious also himself of enlarging his dominions in Italy, and conquered the Lombards, and put an end to their kingdom, and gave great part of their dominions to the pope. He not only confirmed the former donations of his father Pipin, but also made an addition of other countries to them, as Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, the Sabin territory, the whole tract between Lucca and Parma, and that part of Tuscany which belonged to the Lombards: and the tables of these donations he signed himself, and caused them to be signed by the bishops, abbots, and o-
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ther great men then present, and laid them so signed upon the altar of St. Peter. And this was the end of the kingdom of the Lombards, in the 206th year after their possessing Italy, and in the year of Christ 774.

Thirdly, the *state of Rome*, though subject to the popes in things spiritual, was yet in things temporal governed by the senate and people, who after their defection from the eastern emperors, still retained many of their old privileges, and elected both the western emperor and the popes. After Charles the great had overthrown the kingdom of the Lombards, he came again to Rome, and was there by the pope, bishops, abbots, and people of Rome chosen Roman patrician, which is the degree of honor and power next to emperor. He then settled the affairs of Italy, and permitted the pope to hold under him the duchy of Rome with other territories: but after a few years, the Romans desirous to recover their liberty, conspired against pope Leo III. accused him of many crimes, and imprisoned him. His accusers were heard on a day appointed before Charles and a council of French and Italian bishops: but the pope, without pleading his own cause or making any defence, was acquitted, his accusers were slain or banished, and he himself was declared superior to all human judicature. And thus the foundation was laid for the absolute authority of the pope over the Romans, which was completed by degrees; and Charles in return was chosen emperor of the west. However after the death of Charles the great, the Romans again conspired against the pope; but Lewis the pious, the son and successor of Charles acquitted him again. In the mean while Leo was dangerously ill; which as soon as the Romans his enemies perceived, they rose again, burnt and plundered his villa's, and thence marched to Rome to recover what things they complained were taken from them by force; but they were repressed by some of the emperor's troops. The same emperor Lewis the pious, at the request of pope Paschal, confirmed

firmed the donations which his father and grandfather had made to the see of Rome. Sigonius has recited the confirmation: and therein are mentioned Rome and its duchy containing part of Tuscany and Campania, Ravenna with the exarchate and Pentapolis, and the other part of Tuscany and the countries taken from the Lombards: and all these are granted to the pope and his successors to the end of the world, *ut in suo delineant jure, principatu, atque ditione*, that they should hold them in their own right, principality and dominion. These, as we conceive, were *the three horns, three of the first horns*, which fell before the little horn: and the pope hath in a manner pointed himself out for the person by wearing *the triple crown*.

4. In other respects too the pope fully answers the character of the little horn; so that if exquisite fitness of application may assure us of the true sense of the prophecy, we can no longer doubt concerning the person. He is *a little horn*: And the power of the popes was originally very small, and their temporal dominions were little and inconsiderable in comparison with others of the ten horns.—*He shall be divers from the first*: (ver. 24.) The Greek and Arabic translate it, that he shall exceed in wickedness all before him; and so most of the fathers, who made use only of the Greek translation, understood it; but it rather signifies that his kingdom shall be of a different nature and constitution: And the power of the pope differs greatly from that of all other princes, being an ecclesiastical and spiritual, as well as a civil and temporal authority.—*And behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man*: (ver. 8.) To denote his cunning and foresight, his looking out and watching all opportunities to promote his own interests: And the policy of the Roman hierarchy hath almost passed into a proverb; the pope is properly an *overlooker* or *overseer*, *episcopus*, or bishop in the literal sense of the word,—*He had a mouth speaking very great things*: (ver. 8, 20.) And who hath been more noisy and blustering than the pope, especially in former ages,

ages, boasting of his supremacy, thundring out his bulls and anathema's, excommunicating princes, and absolving subjects from their allegiance?—*His look was more stout than his fellows*: (ver. 20.) And the pope assumes a superiority not only over his fellow bishops, but even over crowned heads, and requires his foot to be kissed, and greater honors to be paid to him than to kings and emperors themselves.—*And he shall speak great words against the most High*, (ver. 25.) or as Symmachus interprets it, *he shall speak great words as the most High*; setting up himself above all laws divine and human, arrogating to himself godlike attributes and titles of *holiness* and *infallibility*, exacting obedience to his ordinances and decrees in preference to, and open violation of reason and scripture, insulting men, and blaspheming God. In Gratian's decretals the pope hath the title of *God* given to him, —*And he shall wear out the saints of the most High*; by wars and massacres and inquisitions, persecuting and destroying the faithful servants of Jesus and the true worshippers of God, who protest against his innovations, and refuse to comply with the idolatry practised in the church of Rome.—*And he shall think to change times and laws*; appointing fasts and feasts, canonizing saints, granting pardons and indulgencies for sins, instituting new modes of worship, imposing new articles of faith, injoining new rules of practice, and reversing at pleasure the laws both of God and men.—*And they shall be given into his band, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time.* *A time*, all agree, signifies a year; and *a time and times and the dividing of time*, or *half a time*, are three years and a half. So long and no longer, as the Romanists conceive, the power of Antichrist will continue: but it is impossible for all the things, which are predicted of Antichrist, to be fulfilled in so short a space of time; and neither is Antichrist or the little horn a single man, but a kingdom. Single men are not the subjects of this prophecy, but kingdoms. The *four kings*, (ver. 17.) are not four single kings, but king-

kingdoms ; and so the *ten horns* or *kings* (ver. 24.) are not ten single kings, but kingdoms ; and so likewise the *little horn* is not a single king, but a kingdom, not a single man, but a succession of men, exercising such powers, and performing such actions as are here described. We must therefore compute the time according to the nature and genius of the prophetic language. *A time* then, *and times*, *and half a time* are three years and a half : and the antient Jewish year consisting of twelve months, and each month of thirty days, *a time and times and half a time*, or three years and a half, are reckoned in the Revelation (xi. 2, 3, xii. 6, 14.) as equivalent to *forty and two months*, or *a thousand two hundred and threescore days* : and a day in the stile of the prophets is a year ; *I have appointed thee each day for a year*, saith God to Ezekiel ; (iv. 6.) and it is confessed, that the *seventy weeks* in the ninth chapter of Daniel are weeks of years ; and consequently 1260 *days* are 1260 *years*. So long Antichrist or the little horn will continue : but from what point of time the commencement of these 1260 years is to be dated, is not so easy to determine. It should seem that they are to be computed from the full establishment of the power of the pope, and no less is implied in the expression *given into his hand*. Now the power of the pope, as a horn or temporal prince, it hath been shown, was established in the eighth century : and 1260 years from that time will lead us down to about the year of Christ 2000, or about the 6000th year of the world : and there is an old tradition both among Jews and Christians, that at the end of six thousand years the Messiah shall come, and the world shall be renewed, the reign of the wicked one shall cease, and the reign of the saints upon earth shall begin. But as Irenæus saith in a like case, it is surer and safer to wait for the completion of the prophecy, than to conjecture and to divine about it. When the end shall come, then we shall know better whence to date the beginning.

V. All these kingdoms will be succeeded by the kingdom of the Messiah. *I beheld, saith Daniel, (v. 9, 10.) till the thrones were cast down, or rather till the thrones were set, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministred unto him: and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, or the judges did sit, and the books were opened.* These metaphors and figures are borrowed from the solemnities of earthly judicatories, and particularly of the great Sanhedrim of the Jews, where the father of the consistory sat, with his assessors seated on each side of him in the form of a semicircle, and the people standing before him: and from this description again was borrowed the description of the day of judgment in the New Testament.

I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. (ver. 11.) The beast will be destroyed because of the great words which the horn spake, and the destruction of the beast will also be the destruction of the horn; and consequently the horn is a part of the fourth beast, or of the Roman empire. *As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. (ver. 12.)* When the dominion was taken away from the other beasts, their bodies were not destroyed, they were suffered to continue still in being: but when the dominion shall be taken away from this beast, his body shall totally be destroyed; because other kingdoms succeeded to those, but none other earthly kingdom shall succeed to this.

I saw in the night-visions, and behold, one like the son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. (ver. 13.) How strange and forced, how

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absurd and unworthy of Grotius is it to apply this to the Romans, which hath always been, and can only be properly understood of the Messiah? From hence *the son of man* came to be a known phrase for the Messiah among the Jews. From hence it was taken and used so frequently in the gospels: and our Saviour intimates himself to be this very son of man in saying (Matth. xxvi. 64, 65.) *Hereafter shall ye see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*; and thereupon he was charged by the high-priest with having spoken blasphemy.

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (ver. 14.) All these kingdoms shall in their turns be destroyed, but the kingdom of the Messiah shall stand for ever: and it was in allusion to this prophecy, that the angel said of Jesus before he was conceived in the womb, (Luke i. 33.) *He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

After what manner these great changes will be effected, we cannot pretend to say, as God hath not been pleased to reveal it. We see the remains of the ten horns, which arose out of the Roman empire. We see the little horn still subsisting, tho' not in full strength and vigor, but as we hope upon the decline, and tending towards a dissolution. And having seen so many of these particulars accomplished, we can have no reason to doubt that the rest also will be fulfilled in due season, tho' we cannot frame any conception how Christ will be manifested in glory, how the little horn with the body of the fourth beast will be given to the burning flame, or how the saints will take the kingdom, and possess it for ever and ever. It is the nature of such prophecies not to be perfectly understood, till they are fulfilled. The best comment upon them will be their completion.

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It may yet add some farther light to these prophecies, if we compare this and the former together; for comparing scripture with scripture is the best way to understand both the one and the other. What was represented to Nebuchadnezzar in the form of a *great image*, was represented again to Daniel by *four great wild beasts*: and the beasts degenerate, as the metals in the image grow worse and worse, the lower they descend.

This image's head was of fine gold, and the first beast was like a lion with eagle's wings; and these answer to each other; and both represented the powers then reigning, or the kingdom of the Babylonians: but it appeared in splendor and glory to Nebuchadnezzar, as it was then in its flourishing condition; the *plucking* of its *wings*, and its humiliation was shown to Daniel, as it was then drawing near to its fatal end.

The breast and arms of silver, and the second beast like a bear were designed to represent the second kingdom, or that of the Medes and Persians. The *two arms* are supposed to denote the two people; but some farther particulars were hinted to Daniel, of the one people rising up above the other people, and of the conquest of three additional kingdoms. To Nebuchadnezzar this kingdom was called *inferior*, or worse than the former; and to Daniel it was described as very cruel, *Arise, devour much flesh*.

The third kingdom, or that of the Macedonians, was represented by *the belly and thighs of brass*, and by *the third beast like a leopard with four wings of a fowl*. It was said to Nebuchadnezzar, that it *should bear rule over all the earth*; and in Daniel's vision, *dominion was given to it*. The *four heads* signify Alexander's four successors; but the *two thighs* can only signify the two principal of them, the Seleucidæ, and Lagidæ, the Syrian and Egyptian kings.

The legs of iron, and the fourth beast with great iron teeth, correspond exactly; and as *iron breaketh in pieces* all other metals, so the fourth beast *devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet*

feet of it; and they were both therefore equally proper representatives of the fourth kingdom, or the Roman, which was stronger and more powerful than all the former kingdoms. The *ten toes* too and the *ten horns* were alike fit emblems of the ten kingdoms, which arose out of the division of the Roman empire; but all that relates to *the little horn* was revealed only unto Daniel, as a person more immediately interested in the fate of the church.

The *stone*, that was *cut out of the mountain without hands*, and became itself a mountain, and filled the whole earth, is explained to be a kingdom, which shall prevail over all other kingdoms, and become universal and everlasting. In like manner, *one like the son of man came to the antient of days*, and was advanced to a kingdom, which shall prevail likewise over all other kingdoms, and become universal and everlasting.

Such concord and agreement is there between these prophecies of Daniel, which remarkable as they are in many things, are in nothing more remarkable, than that they comprehend so many distant events, and extend through so many ages, from the reign of the Babylonians to the consummation of all things. They are truly, as Mr. Mede called them “ *the sacred calendar and great almanac of prophecy*, a prophetic chronology of times measured by the succession of four principal kingdoms, from the beginning of the captivity of Israel, until the mystery of God should be finished.” They are as it were the great outlines, the rest mostly are filling up the parts; and as these will cast light upon the subsequent prophecies, so the subsequent prophecies will reflect light upon them again.

Daniel was *much troubled*, (ver. 28.) and his countenance changed in him at the foresight of the calamities to be brought upon the church by the little horn: but he kept the matter in his heart. Much more may good men be grieved at the sight of these calamities, and lament the prevalence of popery and wickedness

in the world : but let them *keep it in their heart*, that a time of just retribution will certainly come. The proof may be drawn from the moral attributes of God, as well as from his promise ; (ver. 26, 27.) *The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey him.*

III.

DANIEL's *vision of the RAM and He-Goat.*

HITHERTO the prophecies of Daniel, that is from the fourth verse of the second chapter to the eighth chapter, are written in Chaldee. As they greatly concerned the Chaldæans, so they were published in that language. But the remaining prophecies are written in Hebrew, because they treat altogether of affairs subsequent to the times of the Chaldæans, and no ways relate to them, but principally to the church and people of God. Which is a plain proof, that the scriptures were originally written in such a manner as they might be best understood by the people : and consequently it is defeating the very end and design of writing them, to *take away the key of knowledge*, and to keep them locked up in an unknown tongue. We may observe too that in the former part of the book of Daniel he is generally spoken of in the third person, but in the latter part he speaketh of himself in the first person, which is some kind of proof that the book was written, if not by different persons, yet at different times.

Daniel's former vision of the four great beasts, representing the four great empires of the world, was (vii. 1.) *in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon.*

lon. He had another vision in the *third* year of the same king Belshazzar, that is about 553 years before Christ. (viii. 1.) *In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar, a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. It was exhibited to him (ver. 2.) at the palace in Shushan, and by the side of the river Ulai, or Eulæus, as it is called by the Greeks and Romans. And I saw in a vision, (and it came to pass when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam) and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river Ulai.*

In the former vision there appeared four beasts, because there four empires were represented : but here are only two, because here we have a representation of what was transacted chiefly within two empires. The first of the four empires, that is the Babylonian, is wholly omitted here, for its fate was sufficiently known, and it was now drawing very near to a conclusion. The second empire in the former vision, is the first in this ; and what was there compared to a bear, is here prefigured by a ram. *Then I lifted up mine eyes, saith Daniel, (ver. 3.) and saw, and behold, there stood before the river, a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high ; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. This ram with two horns, according to the explication of the angel Gabriel, was the empire of the Medes and Persians ; (ver. 20.) The ram which thou sawest having two horns, are the kings or kingdoms of Media and Persia.* This empire which was formed by the conjunction of the Medes and Persians, and is often called the Medo-Persian, was not unfitly represented by a ram with two horns. Cyrus, the founder of this empire, was son of Cambyfes king of Persia, and by his mother Mandane was grandson of Astyages king of Media ; and afterwards marrying the daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxares king of Media, he succeeded to both crowns, and united the kingdoms of Media and Persia. It was a coalition of two very formidable powers, and therefore it is said that *the two horns were*

high : but one, it is added, was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. The kingdom of Media was the more antient of the two, and more famous in history ; Persia was of little note or account till the time of Cyrus : but under Cyrus the Persians gained and maintained the ascendant ; some authors say that Cyrus subdued the king of the Medes by force of arms ; and his son Cambyfes upon his death-bed earnestly exhorted the Persians not to suffer the kingdom to return again to the Medes. But a question still remains, why that empire, which was before likened to a *bear* for its cruelty, should now be represented by a *ram* ? Mr. Mede's conjecture is ingenious and plausible enough, that the Hebrew word for a *ram*, and the Hebrew word for *Persia*, both springing from the same root, and both implying something of strength, the one is not improperly made the type of the other. The propriety of it appears farther from hence, as is suggested likewise by another writer in the general preface to Mr. Mede's works, that it was usual for the king of Persia to wear a ram's head made of gold, and adorned with precious stones, instead of a diadem ; for so Ammianus Marcellinus describes him. Bishop Chandler and others farther observe that "rams heads with horns, one higher and the other lower, are still to be seen on the pillars at Persepolis."

The great exploits of the ram are recapitulated in the next verse. (ver. 4.) *I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward, so that no beast might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand, but he did according to his will, and became great.* Under Cyrus himself, the Persians pushed their conquests *westward* as far as the *Ægean* sea and the bounds of Asia : *northward* they subdued the Armenians, Cappadocians, and various other nations : *southward* they conquered Egypt, not under Cyrus as Xenophon affirms, yet most certainly under Cambyfes, the son and successor of Cyrus. Under Darius they subdued India, but in the

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prophecy no mention is made of their conquests in the east, because those countries lay very remote from the Jews, and were of little concern or consequence to them. The ram was strong and powerful, *so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hands*; that is none of the neighbouring kingdoms were able to contend with the Persians, but all fell under their dominion. *He did according to his will, and became great*: and the Persian empire was increased and enlarged to such a degree, that it extended (Esther i. 1.) *from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces*; so that seven provinces were added to the hundred and twenty (Dan. vi. 1.) which it contained in the time of Cyrus.

After the ram the he-goat appears next upon the scene. *And as I was considering, saith Daniel, (ver. 5.) beheld, an he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.* Which is thus interpreted by the angel Gabriel, (ver. 21.) *The rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes, is the first king, or kingdom.* This he-goat *came from the west*: and who is ignorant that Europe lieth westward of Asia? He came *on the face of the whole earth*, carrying every thing before him in all the three parts of the world then known: *and he touched not the ground*, his marches were so swift, and his conquests so rapid, that he might be said in a manner to fly over the ground without touching it. For the same reason the same empire in the former vision was likened to a *leopard*, which is a swift nimble animal, and to denote the greater quickness and impetuosity, to a *leopard with four wings.* *And the goat had a notable horn between his eyes*; this horn, saith the angel, *is the first king, or kingdom of the Greeks in Asia*, which was erected by Alexander the great, and continued for some years in his brother Philip Aridæus, and his two young sons Alexander Ægus and Hercules. Dean Prideaux, speaking of the

swiftness of Alexander's marches, hath a passage, which is very pertinent to our present purpose. "He flew with victory swifter than others can travel, often with his horse pursuing his enemies upon the spur whole days and nights, and sometimes making long marches for several days one after the other, as once he did in pursuit of Darius of near forty miles a day for eleven days together. So that by the speed of his marches he came upon his enemy before they were aware of him, and conquered them before they could be in a posture to resist him. Which exactly agreeth with the description given of him in the prophecies of Daniel some ages before, he being in them set forth under the similitude of a panther or leopard with four wings: for he was impetuous and fierce in his warlike expeditions, as a panther after his prey, and came on upon his enemies with that speed, as if he flew with a double pair of wings. And to this purpose he is in another place of those prophecies compared to an he-goat coming from the west with that swiftness upon the king of Media and Persia, that he seemed as if his feet did not touch the ground. And his actions, as well in this comparison as in the former, fully verified the prophecy."

In the two next verses we have an account of the Grecians overthrowing the Persian empire. (ver. 6, 7.) *And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns, and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. The ram had before pushed westward, and the Persians in the reigns of Darius Hystaspis and Xerxes had poured down with great armies into Greece: but now the Grecians in return carried their arms into Asia, and the he-goat invaded the ram that had invaded him. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which*

which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. One can hardly read these words without having some image of Darius's army standing and guarding the river Granicus, and of Alexander on the other side with his forces plunging in, swimming across the stream, and rushing on the enemy with all the fire and fury that can be imagined. It was certainly a strange rash mad attempt with only about thirty-five thousand men to attack at such disadvantage, an army of more than five times the number: but he was successful in it, and this success diffused a terror of his name, and opened his way to the conquest of Asia. *And I saw him come close unto the ram:* he had several close engagements or set battles with the king of Persia, and particularly at the river Granicus in Phrygia, at the straits of Issus in Cilicia, and in the plains of Arbela in Assyria. *And he was moved with choler against him,* for the cruelties which the Persians had exercised towards the Grecians; and for Darius's attempting to corrupt sometimes his soldiers to betray him, and sometimes his friends to destroy him; so that he would not listen to the most advantageous offers of peace, but determined to pursue the Persian king, not as a generous and noble enemy, but as a poisoner and a murderer, to the death that he deserved. *And he smote the ram, and brake his two horns:* he subdued Persia and Media with the other provinces and kingdoms of the Persian empire; and it is memorable, that in Persia he sacked and burned the royal city of Persepolis, the capital of the empire; and in Media Darius was seized and made a prisoner by some of his own traitor-subjects, who not long afterwards basely murdered him. *And there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him;* he conquered wherever he came, routed all the forces, took all the cities and castles, and entirely subverted and ruined the Persian empire. *And there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand;* not even his numerous armies could defend the king of Persia,

though his forces in the battle of Issus amounted to six hundred thousand men, and in that of Arbela to ten or eleven hundred thousand, whereas the whole number of Alexander's was not more than forty-seven thousand in either engagement. So true is the observation of the Psalmist, (xxxiii. 16.) *there is no king saved by the multitude of an host*: and especially when God hath decreed the fall of empires, then even the greatest must fall. The fortune of Alexander, of which so much hath been said; Plutarch hath written a whole treatise about it; the fortune of Alexander, I say, was nothing but the providence of God.

Nothing is fixed and stable in human affairs; and the empire of the goat, though exceeding great, was perhaps for that reason the sooner broken into pieces. (ver. 8.) *Therefore the he-goat waxed very great, and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones, towards the four winds of heaven.* Which the angel thus interprets, (ver. 22.) *Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.* The empire of the goat was in its full strength, when Alexander died of a fever at Babylon. He was succeeded in the throne by his natural brother Philip Arridæus, and by his own two sons Alexander Ægus and Hercules: but in the space of about fifteen years they were all murdered, and then the first horn or kingdom was entirely broken. The royal family being thus extinct, the governors of provinces, who had usurped the power, assumed the title of kings: and by the defeat and death of Antigonus in the battle of Ipsus, they were reduced to four, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus, who parted Alexander's dominions between them, and divided and settled them into four kingdoms. These four kingdoms are the *four notable horns*, which came up in the room of the first great horn; and are the same as the *four heads of the leopard* in the former vision. *Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power*; they were to be kingdoms of Greeks, not of
Alexander's

Alexander's own family, but only of his nation; and neither were they to be equal to him in power and dominion, as an empire united is certainly more powerful than the same empire divided, and the whole is greater than any of the parts. They were likewise to extend *toward the four winds of heaven*: and in the partition of the empire, Cassander held Macedon, and Greece, and the *western* parts; Lyfimachus had Thrace, Bithynia, and the *northern* regions; Ptolemy possessed Egypt, and the *southern* countries; and Seleucus obtained Syria, and the *eastern* provinces. Thus were they divided *toward the four winds of heaven*.

As in the former vision a little horn sprang up among the ten horns of the Roman empire, so here a little horn is described as rising among the four horns of the Grecian empire. (ver. 9, 10, 11, 12.) *And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great even to the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And a host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised, and prospered. All which is thus explained by the angel: (ver. 23, 24, 25.) And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the prince of princes, but he shall be broken without hand. This little horn is by the generality*

nerality of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, antient and modern, supposed to mean Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who was a great enemy and cruel persecutor of the Jews. So Josephus understands the prophecy, and says that “our nation suffered these calamities under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel saw, and many years before wrote what things should come to pass.” In like manner St. Jerome explains it of Antiochus Epiphanes, and says “that he fought against Ptolemy Philometor and the Egyptians, that is *against the south*; and again *against the east*, and those who attempted a change of government in Persia; and lastly he fought against the Jews, took Judea, entered into Jerusalem, and in the temple of God set up the image of Jupiter Olympius.” With St. Jerome agree most of the antient fathers, and modern divines and commentators; but then they all allow that Antiochus Epiphanes was a type of Antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes at first sight doth indeed in some features very much resemble the *little horn*; but upon a nearer view and examination it will evidently appear, that in other parts there is no manner of similitude or correspondence between them. Sir Isaac Newton with that sagacity, which was peculiar to him, and with which he penetrated into scripture as well as into nature, perceived plainly that the *little horn* could not be drawn for Antiochus Epiphanes, but must be designed for some other subject: and though we shall not entirely follow his plan, nor build altogether upon his foundation, yet we shall be obliged to make use of several of his materials. There are then two ways of expounding this prophecy of the *little horn*, either by understanding it of Antiochus Epiphanes, and considering Antiochus as a type of Antichrist; or by leaving him wholly out of the question, and seeking another application: and which method of the two is to be preferred, will better appear in the progress of this discourse.

A *horn* in the title of Daniel doth not signify any particular king, but is an emblem of a kingdom. In
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the former vision the *ten horns* were not ten kings, but so many kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was divided: and the *little horn* did not typify a single person, but a succession of men, claiming such prerogatives, and exerting such powers, as are there specified. In this vision likewise the *two horns* of the ram do not represent the two kings, Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian, but the two kingdoms of Media and Persia: and for this plain reason, because the ram hath all along two horns; even when he is attacked by the he-goat, he hath still two horns; but the two kingdoms of Media and Persia had been long united under one king. The horns of the he-goat too prefigure not kings but kingdoms. The first *great horn* doth not design Alexander himself, but the kingdom of Alexander, as long as the title continued united in him, and his brother, and two sons. The *four horns*, which arose after the first was broken, are expressly said (ver. 22.) to be *four kingdoms*: and consequently it should seem, that the *little horn* cannot signify Antiochus Epiphanes or any single king, but must denote some kingdom; by *kingdom* meaning, what the antients meant, any government, state or polity in the world, whether monarchy, or republic, or of what form soever. Now what kingdom was there, that rose up during the subsistence of the four kingdoms of the Grecian empire, and was advanced to any greatness and eminence, but the Roman? The first *great horn* was the kingdom of Alexander and his family. The *four horns* were *four kingdoms*, not of his family, but only of the nation. *Four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation*: and doth not this imply that the remaining kingdom, the kingdom of the *little horn*, should be not of the nation?

The general character therefore is better adapted to the Romans: and now let us consider the particular properties and actions of the little horn, whether they may be more justly ascribed to Antiochus Epiphanes, or to the Romans. *And out of one of them came forth a little horn.* Antiochus Epiphanes was indeed the
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son of Antiochus the great, king of Syria; and he is said to be the *little horn*, because he rose from small beginnings to the kingdom, having been many years an hostage at Rome. But then his kingdom was nothing more than a continuation of one of the four kingdoms; it cannot possibly be reckoned as a fifth kingdom springing up among the four; and the little horn is plainly some power different and distinct from the four former horns. Is not this therefore more applicable to the Romans, who were a new and different power, who rose from small beginnings to an exceeding great empire, who first subdued Macedon and Greece the capital of the kingdom of the goat, and from thence spread and enlarged their conquests over the rest? Nor let it seem strange, that the Romans who were prefigured by a great *beast* in the former vision, should in this be represented only by the *horn* of a beast; for nothing is more usual, than to describe the same person or thing under different images upon different occasions: and besides in this vision the Roman empire is not designed at large, but only the Roman empire as a horn of the goat. When the Romans first got footing in Greece, then they became a horn of the goat. Out of this horn they came, and were at first a little horn, but in process of time overtopped the other horns. From Greece they extended their arms, and over-ran the other parts of the goat's dominions: and their actions within the dominions of the goat, and not the affairs in the western empire, are the principal subject of this prophecy. But their actions, which are most largely and particularly specified, are their great persecution and oppression of the people of God; which renders it probable, that the appellation of *the little horn* might be given them for the same reason, that the great persecutor and oppressor of the saints in the western empire is also called *the little horn*. It is the same kind of power, and therefore might be signified by the same name.

It will appear too that the time agrees better with the Romans. *And in the latter time of their kingdom,*
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When the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. Antiochus Epiphanes might be said indeed to *stand up in the latter time of their kingdom*; because Macedonia, the first of the four kingdoms, was conquered and reduced into a Roman province, during his reign. But when he stood up, *the transgressors in the Jewish nation were not come to the full*, for when he began to reign, * Onias was high-priest of the Jews, and the temporal as well as ecclesiastical government was at this time in the hands of the high-priest, and this Onias was a most worthy good magistrate, as well as a most venerable pious priest. As the author of the second book of Maccabees saith, (2 Mac. iii. 1.) *the holy city was inhabited with all peace, and the laws were kept very well, because of the godliness of Onias the high-priest, and his hatred of wickedness.* It was after this time, that the great corruptions were introduced into the Jewish church and nation; and they were introduced chiefly through the means of Antiochus, by his direction, or under his authority. The Romans might much better be said to stand up *in the latter time of their kingdom*, who saw the end not only of one kingdom, but of all the four; who first subdued the kingdom of Macedon and Greece, and then inherited by the will of Attalus the kingdom of Pergamus, which was the remains of the kingdom of Lysimachus, and afterwards made a province of the kingdom of Syria, and lastly of the kingdom of Egypt. When the Romans stood up too, *the transgressions were come to the full*; for the high-priesthood was exposed to sale; good Onias was ejected for a sum of money to make room for wicked Jason, and Jason was again supplanted for a greater sum of money by a worse man (if possible) than himself, his brother Menelaus: and the golden vessels of the temple were sold to pay for the sacrilegious purchase. At the same time the customs of the heathen nations

* For these and many particulars which follow, the two books of Maccabees, and Josephus his Antiquities of the Jews must be consulted.

nations were introduced among the Jews; the youth were trained up and exercised after the manner of the Greeks; the people apostatized from the true religion, and even *the priests* (2 Mac. iv. 14.) *had no courage to serve any more at the altar, but despising the temple, and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to be partakers of unlawful diversions.* Nay Jerusalem was taken by Antiochus; forty thousand Jews were slain, and as many more were sold into slavery; the temple was profaned even under the conduct of the high-priest Menelaus, was defiled with swines blood, and plundered of every thing valuable; and in the same year, that Paulus Æmilius the Roman consul vanquished Perseus the last king of Macedonia, and thereby put an end to that kingdom, the Jewish religion was put down, and the heathen worship was set up in the cities of Judea, and in Jerusalem; and the temple itself was consecrated to Jupiter Olympius, and his image was erected on the very altar. Then indeed *the transgressors were come to the full*, and then, as we see, the Romans stood up, *a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences.*

A *king* in the prophetic stile is the same as a *kingdom*, and a kingdom, as we before observed, is any state or government. *A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences.* The latter expression in the Syriac is translated *skilful of ruling*, and in the Arabic *skilful of disputations*. We may suppose the meaning to be, that this should be a politic and artful, as well as a formidable power; which is not so properly the character of Antiochus, as of the Romans. They were represented in the former vision by a *beast dreadful and terrible*; and for the same reason they are denominated *a king of fierce countenance*. He cannot so well be said to be *a king of fierce countenance*, who was even frightened out of Egypt by a message from the Romans. The story is worthy of memory. Antiochus Epiphanes was making war upon Egypt, and was in a fair way of becoming master of the whole kingdom. The Romans
therefore

therefore fearing lest he should grow too powerful by annexing Egypt to the crown of Syria, sent an embassy to him, to require him to desist from his enterprise, or to declare war against him. He was drawing near to besiege Alexandria, when he was met by the three ambassadors from Rome. Popillius, the chief of them, had formerly been his friend and acquaintance, while he was an hostage at Rome: and the king at their first meeting graciously offered him his hand in remembrance of their former friendship. But Popillius declined the compliment by saying, that private friendship must give place to the public welfare, and he must first know whether the king was a friend to the Roman state, before he could acknowledge him as a friend to himself: and so saying he presented to him the tables which contained the decree of the senate, and desired an immediate answer. Antiochus opened and perused them, and replied that he would consider the matter with his friends, and return his answer very speedily. But Popillius with a wand that he carried in his hand drew a circle in the sand round the king, and insisted upon his answer, before he stirred out of that circle. The king astonished at this peremptory and imperious manner of proceeding, after some hesitation, said that he would obey the commands of the senate: and then at length Popillius reached forth his hand to him as a friend and confederate. This incident happened very soon after the conquest of Macedonia, which as it dismayed Antiochus, so it emboldened the Romans to act in this manner: and this being their first memorable action as soon as they became a horn or kingdom of the goat, it is very fitly said of them, more fitly than of Antiochus, *a king of fierce countenance shall stand up.*

The other actions likewise of the little horn accord better with the Romans. This horn, though little at first, yet *waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.* This horn therefore, as Sir Isaac Newton justly observes, was to rise up in the north-west parts of those nations,

nations, which composed the body of the goat ; and from thence was to extend his dominion towards Egypt, Syria, and Judea. Observe the particulars. He *waxed exceeding great* : and so did the Roman empire even within the territories of the goat, but not so did Antiochus Epiphanes ; for he was so far from enlarging the kingdom of Syria, that it was less in his time than under most of his predecessors, and he left it as he found it, tributary to the Romans.—*Toward the south* : Antiochus indeed did several times invade Egypt, and gained great advantages over Ptolemy Philometor of Egypt : but he was never able to make himself absolute master of the country, and annex it to the kingdom of Syria ; as the Romans made it a province of their empire, and kept possession of it for several centuries. His designs were frustrated, as we have seen, by an embassy from the Romans ; and he went out of Egypt baffled and disgraced, a word from them being as effectual as an army.—*Toward the east* : the Romans did grow very powerful toward the east ; they conquered and made a province of Syria, which was the eastern kingdom of the goat ; but Antiochus was seated in the east himself, and did not extend his dominions farther eastward. On the contrary the Parthians had withdrawn their obedience from the kings of Syria, and had erected a growing kingdom in the east. Antiochus did indeed vanquish Artaxias, the tributary king of Armenia, who had revolted from him ; but this was rather in the north than in the east. He had not the like success among the Persians, who were also dilatory in paying their tribute ; for having heard much of the riches of Elymais, and particularly of the temple there, he went thither with a design of seizing the treasures of the city and temple ; but the inhabitants rose upon him, repelled and routed him and his army, so that he was forced to fly with disappointment and disgrace out of the country ; and soon after he sickened and died.—*And toward the pleasant land*, that is Judea ; for so it is called in the Psalms (cvi. 24.) *the pleasant land* ; and in Jeremiah (iii. 19.) *a plea-*

a pleasant land, a goodly herilage; and so twice again afterwards in Daniel. (xi. 16, 41.) Antiochus did indeed take Jerusalem, and miserably harass and oppress the Jews, as it has been above related: but the Jews in a little time, under the conduct of the Maccabees, recovered their liberties, and established their religion and government in greater splendor and security than before. The Romans more effectually conquered and subdued them, first made a province of their country, and then destroyed the city and temple, and dispersed the people, so that after so fatal a fall they have never from that time to this been able to rise again.

Another remarkable property, that eminently distinguished the little horn from all others, was that *his power should be mighty, but not by his own power*. The best explanation commentators can give of it, who understand the whole of Antiochus Epiphanes, is that he attained to the crown chiefly by the favour and assistance of Eumenes king of Pargamus and Attalus his brother, who having at that time some jealousy of the Romans, were desirous to make the king of Syria their friend: but we do not read that they assisted him in any of his wars afterwards, and neither was his kingdom strengthened by foreign armies or alliances. They who conceive Antiochus to be a type of Antichrist, offer a fairer interpretation, because Antichrist was to exercise an usurped authority, and not his own, and the kings of the earth, according to St. John, (Rev. xvii. 13.) were to *give their power and strength unto the beast*. But this part of the prophecy, as well as the rest, can no where be so justly and properly applied, as to the Romans. With them it quadrates exactly, and with none of the other horns or kingdoms of the goat. The strength of the other kingdoms consisted in themselves, and had its foundation in some part of the goat: but the Roman empire, as a horn or kingdom of the goat, was not mighty by its own power, was not strong by virtue of the goat, but drew its nourishment and strength from Rome

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and

and Italy. There grew the trunk and body of the tree, though the branches extended over Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt.

The remainder of the prophecy relates mostly to the persecution and oppression of the people of God. *And he waxed great even to the host of heaven, (or against the host of heaven) and he cast down some of the host, and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them,* that is, the Jewish state in general, *the mighty and the holy people,* (ver. 24.) or the Priests and Levites in particular; who are called *stars*, as they were eminent for their station and illustrious for their knowledge; and *the host of heaven*, as they watched and served in the temple, and their service is denominated *a warfare.* (Num. viii. 24, 25.) This passage was in some measure fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes as well as by the Romans: but our Saviour making use of the like expressions, (Mat. xxiv. 29.) *the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken,* in speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, this passage also may more properly be referred to that event.

Yea he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, (or against the prince of the host) and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. Antiochus did indeed take away the daily sacrifice, but he did not cast down the place of his sanctuary, he did not destroy the temple. He took away the daily sacrifice for a few years, but the Romans for many ages: and the Romans likewise utterly destroyed the temple, which he spoiled only and profaned.

And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression. The word here translated *an host* is rendered in other places, (Job vii. 1.) and in the book of Daniel itself, (x. 1.) *an appointed time:* *And an appointed time was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression:* Or as we read in the margin, *The host was given over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice, and he cast down*

down the truth to the ground, and he practised and prospered. Or as the same thing is expressed by the angel: *He shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people; and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many.* But Antiochus did not so mightily destroy the Jews, nor prosper in his practices and designs against them: When he took Jerusalem, he slew forty thousand, and sold forty thousand more: but when the city was besieged and taken by the Romans, the number of the captives amounted to ninety-seven thousand, and of the slain to eleven hundred thousand. The Romans too carried their conquest and revenge so far, as to put an end to the government of the Jews, and entirely to take away their place and nation. Antiochus meant as much to root out the whole people; his malice was as great, but his success was not equal: for though his forces were victorious at first, yet they were defeated at last, and his generals, Apollonius, Seron, Nicanor and Gorgias; Timotheus and Bacchides, and even Lysias himself, were all shamefully routed one after another: and the news of these defeats hastened his death.

It is farther added, that *he shall also stand up against the prince of princes.* If by *the prince of princes* the high-priest be meant, it is very true that Antiochus did put in and put out the high-priests at pleasure, but the Romans took away the whole administration. If by *the prince of princes* be meant, as most probably was meant, the Messiah, then Antiochus had no share in the completion; it was effected by the Romans. It was not by the malice of the Jews, but by the authority of the Romans, that he was put to death; and he suffered the punishment of the Roman malefactors and slaves. And indeed it is very worthy of our most serious consideration, whether this part of the prophecy be not a sketch of the fate and sufferings of the Christian, as well as of the Jewish church. Nothing is more usual with the prophets than to describe the religion and worship of latter times by metaphors

and figures borrowed from their own religion. The Christians may full as well as the Jews be comprehended under the name of *the holy people*, or *people of the holy ones*. And the Romans not only crucified our Saviour, but also persecuted his disciples for above three centuries : and when at length they embraced the Christian religion, they soon corrupted it ; so that it may be questioned, whether their favour was not as hurtful to the church, as their enmity. As the power of the Roman emperors declined, that of the Roman pontiffs increased : and may it not with equal truth and justice be said of the latter as of the former, that they *cast down the truth to the ground, and practised, and prospered* ? How applicable in this sense is every part of the angel's interpretation ! *A king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power : and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people, (or the people of the holy ones :) And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many : he shall also stand up against the prince of princes, but he shall be broken without hand.* And this farther opens and explains the reason of the appellation of *the little horn*. The persecuting power of Rome, whether exercised towards the Jews, or towards the Christians, or by the emperors, or by the popes, is still *the little horn*. The tyranny is the same ; but as exerted in Greece and the east, it is the little horn of the he-goat or the third empire ; as exerted in Italy and the west, it is the little horn of the fourth beast or the fourth empire.

But the little horn, like other tyrannical powers, was to come to a remarkable end ; *he shall be broken without hand*. As the stone in Nebuchadnezzar's dream was *cut out of the mountain without hands*, that is not by human, but by supernatural means ; so the little horn *shall be broken without hand*, not die the common death, not fall by the hand of men, but
perish

perish by a stroke from heaven. And this agrees perfectly with the former predictions of the fatal catastrophe of the Romans. *The stone, that is the power of Christ, (ii. 34.) smote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.* Again, (vii. 11.) *I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.* And again, (ver. 26.) *the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end.* All which implies that the dominion of the Romans shall finally be destroyed with some extraordinary manifestation of the divine power. It is indeed very true, that Antiochus Epiphanes died in an extraordinary manner. He was returning from his unsuccessful expedition into Persia, when he heard the news of the defeat of his armies one after another by the forces of the Maccabees. He set forward therefore in great rage and fury, breathing nothing but death and destruction to the whole generation of the Jews. But in the way he was seized with violent pains in his bowels; and having a fall from his chariot, he was sorely bruised, and his inward pains grew more violent, so that he was not able to proceed in his journey, but was forced to stop at a little town upon the road. There he lay in great torment, and filthy ulcers broke out in his body, from whence issued worms, and such a stench, that he became intolerable to others, and even to himself. Nor were the torments and agonies of his mind less than those of his body. He was vexed even to distraction, thought he saw dreadful specters and apparitions, and suffered all the pangs and horrors of a guilty conscience: and in this miserable condition he lay pining and rotting till he died. This is the account that is given of his death, and confirmed by Heathen as well as by Jewish historians: but with this difference, that the former ascribe it to the vengeance of the gods for the sacrilege that he designed to commit at Elymais; the latter represent it as the just judgment of heaven for

the sacrilege that he really committed at Jerusalem, and for the barbarous slaughter that he made of so many thousands of the Jews; and they say, that he himself upon his death-bed confessed as much: and which of these accounts is the more probable and credible, every intelligent reader will easily determine.

By thus tracing the particulars it appears, that tho' some of them may agree very well with Antiochus Epiphanes, yet others can by no means be reconciled to him; but they all agree and correspond exactly with the Romans, and with no one else; so that the application of the character to them must be the right application. The fitness and propriety of it will farther appear by considering the time, that is allotted for the duration and continuance of the vision. *I will make thee know*, saith the angel to Daniel, (ver. 19.) *what shall be in the last end, or to the last end of the indignation*: that is, as Mr. Lowth paraphraseth it, "I will explain to thee the whole series of God's judgments upon his people to the end and conclusion of them:" but that end and conclusion is not yet come. There are intimations in the prophets, that God's indignation against his people will be accomplished, and the final destruction of the Roman dominion will fall out about the same period. But the time is more particularly noted. One angel asked another angel, (ver. 13.) *How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?* In the original there is no such word as *concerning*; and Mr. Lowth rightly observes, that the words may be rendered more agreeably to the Hebrew thus, *For how long a time shall the vision last, the daily sacrifice be taken away, and the transgression of desolation continue, &c.?* After the same manner the question is translated by the Seventy, and in the Arabic version, and in the Vulgar Latin. The answer is (ver. 14.) *Unto two thousand, and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.* Now these two thousand and three hundred days can by

no computation be accommodated to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, even tho' the days be taken for natural days. Two thousand and three hundred days are six years and somewhat more than a quarter: but the profanation of the altar under Antiochus lasted but three years complete, according to the author of the first book of the Maccabees; (1 Macc. i. 59, compared with iv. 52.) and the desolation of the temple, and the taking away of the daily sacrifice by Apollonius continued but three years and a half, according to Josephus. Mr. Mede proposeth a method to reconcile the difference, and saith that the time is "not to be reckoned from the highth of the calamity, when the *daily sacrifice should be taken away*, (from thence it is but three years) but from the beginning of the transgression, which occasioned this desolation, and is described 1 Macc. i. 11, &c." But Antiochus began to reign, according to the author of the first book of the Maccabees, (i. 10.) *in the 137th year of the kingdom of the Greeks* or æra of the Seleucidæ; and *in those days* was the beginning of the transgression, which is described 1 Macc. i. 11, &c. that is ten or eleven years before the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was performed *in the 148th year* according to the same author; (iv. 52.) or if we compute the time from Antiochus's first going up against Jerusalem, and spoiling the city and temple, these things were done according to the same author (i. 20.) *in the 143d year*; so that this reckoning would fall short of the term assigned, as the other exceeds it. The difficulty or impossibility rather of making these two thousand and three hundred days accord with the times of Antiochus, I suppose, obliged the antients to consider Antiochus as a type of Antichrist: and therefore Jerome saith in his comment, that this place most Christians refer to Antichrist; and affirms, that what was transacted in a type under Antiochus, will be fulfilled in truth under Antichrist. The days without doubt are to be taken, agreeably to the stile of Daniel in other places, not for natural, but for prophetic days or

years: and as the question was asked, not only how long the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the transgression of desolation continue, but also how long the vision shall last; so the answer is to be understood, and these two thousand and three hundred days denote the whole time from the beginning of the vision to the cleansing of the sanctuary. The sanctuary is not yet cleansed, and consequently these years are not yet expired. When these years shall be expired, then their end will clearly show from whence their beginning is to be dated, whether from the vision of the ram, or of the he-goat, or of the little horn. It is difficult to fix the precise time, when the prophetic dates begin, and when they end, till the prophecies are fulfilled, and the event declares the certainty of them. If we follow the reading of the Seventy, *Unto two thousand and four hundred days or years*, then perhaps they are to be computed from the vision of the ram, or the establishment of the Persian empire. If we follow the other reading mentioned by Jerome, *Unto two thousand and two hundred days or years*, then perhaps they are to be computed from the vision of the little horn, or the Romans invading the Grecian empire: And it is remarkable, that the Romans first passed over with an army, and made war upon Philip king of Macedonia, just 2000 years before Christ. But if we still retain the common reading, (which probably is the truest and best) *Unto two thousand and three hundred days or years*, then I conceive they are to be computed from the vision of the he-goat, or Alexander's invading Asia. Alexander invaded Asia in the year of the world 3670, and in the year before Christ 334. Two thousand and three hundred years from that time will draw towards the conclusion of the sixth millenium of the world, and about that period, according to an old tradition, which was current before our Saviour's time, and was probably founded upon the prophecies, great changes and revolutions are expected; and particularly as Rabbi Abraham Sebah saith, Rome is to be overthrown, and the Jews
are

are to be restored. The angel farther affirms the truth and certainty of the vision, and of the time allotted for it. (ver. 26.) *The vision of the evening and the morning, which was told, is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision, for it shall be for many days.* The shutting up of the vision implies, that it should not be understood of some time; and we cannot say that it was sufficiently understood, so long as Antiochus Epiphanes was taken for the little horn. The vision being for many days, must necessarily infer a longer term, than the calamity under Antiochus of three years or three years and a half, or even than the whole time from the first beginning of the vision in Cyrus to the cleansing of the sanctuary under Antiochus, which was not * above 371 years. Such a vision could not well be called long to Daniel, who had been so much longer before; and especially as the time assigned for it is *two thousand and three hundred days*, which since they cannot by any account be natural days, must needs be prophetic days, or two thousand and three hundred years. Such a vision may properly enough be said to be for many days.

Daniel was much affected with the misfortunes and afflictions, which were to befall the church and people of God. (ver. 27.) *And I Daniel fainted and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business, and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.* Munster, and Clarius who generally transcribes Munster, are of opinion that Daniel was visited by this sickness, lest he should be lifted up by the sublimity of the visions. I presume they thought his case somewhat like St. Paul's, (2 Cor. xii. 7.) who had *a thorn in the flesh*, or a bodily infirmity, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations. But it is much more probable, that Daniel's sickness proceeded from his grief for his religion and country: as in the former vision he was grieved in his spirit, his cogitations much troubled him,

* See Usher, Prideaux, and other Chronologers.

him, and his countenance changed in him, at the success of the little horn there described. And this is another most conclusive argument, that the calamities under Antiochus Epiphanes could not possibly be the main end and ultimate scope of this prophecy. For the calamities under Antiochus were of small extent and of short duration, in comparison with what the nation had suffered, and was then suffering under Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Antiochus took the city, but Nebuchadnezzar burnt it to the ground. Antiochus profaned the temple, but Nebuchadnezzar utterly destroyed it. Antiochus made captives forty thousand of the Jews, but Nebuchadnezzar carried the whole nation into captivity. Antiochus took away the daily sacrifice for three years and a half, but Nebuchadnezzar abolished all the temple service for seventy years. Why then should Daniel, who had seen and felt these greater calamities, be so much grieved at those lesser disasters of the nation? Present and sensible evils usually affect us most: and therefore that Daniel was so much more affected with the future than with the present, *was astonished, and fainted, and was sick certain days*, can be ascribed to nothing but to his foreseeing, that the future distress and misery of the nation would greatly exceed all that they sustained at present. But the calamities under Antiochus were much less, and much shorter. Those only which they suffered from the Romans, were greater and worse than the evils brought on them by Nebuchadnezzar. And *the transgression of desolation* hath now continued these 1700 years. They expect, and we expect, that at length *the sanctuary will be cleansed*, and that in God's determined time his promise will be fully accomplished; (Amos ix. 11, 12. Acts xv. 16, 17.) *I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*

This

This concern of Daniel, and affection for his religion and country, show him in a very amiable light, and give an additional lustre and glory to his character. But not only in this instance, but in every other, he manifests the same public spirit, and appears no less eminently a patriot than a prophet. Tho' he was torn early from his country and enjoyed all the advantages that he could enjoy in foreign service, yet nothing could make him forget his native home: And in the next chapter we see him pouring out his soul in prayer, and supplicating most earnestly and devoutly for the pardon and restoration of his captive nation. It is a gross mistake therefore to think, that religion will ever extinguish or abate our love for our country. The scriptures will rather incite and inflame it, exhibit several illustrious examples of it, and recommend and inforce this, as well as all other moral and social virtues; and especially when the interests of true religion and of our country are so blended and interwoven, that they cannot well be separated the one from the other. This is a double incentive to the love of our country; and with the same zeal that every pious Jew might say formerly, every honest Briton may say now, with the good Psalmist, (Psalm cxxii. 6, &c.) *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sake I will wish thee prosperity: Yea because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek to do thee good.*

IV.

St. PAUL's prophecy of the Man of Sin.

AS our blessed Saviour hath cited and appealed to the book of Daniel, so likewise have his apostles drawn from the same fountain. St. Paul's and St. John's predictions are in a manner the copies of

of Daniel's originals with some improvements and additions. The same times, the same persons, and the same events are described by St. Paul and St. John as well as by Daniel; and it might therefore with reason be expected, that there should be some similitude and resemblance in the principal features and characters.

St. Paul hath left in writing, besides others, two most memorable prophecies, both relating to the same subject, the one concerning *the man of sin*, the other concerning *the apostasy of the latter times*, the former contained in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and the latter in the first Epistle to Timothy. The prophecy concerning *the man of sin*, having been delivered first in time, may fitly be considered first in order: and for the fuller manifestation of the truth and exactness of this prediction, it may be proper to investigate the genuine sense and meaning of the passage; and to establish what we conceive to be the only true and legitimate application.

It is proper to investigate the genuine sense and meaning of the passage; for a prophecy must be rightly understood, before it can be rightly applied. The apostle introduces the subject thus, (2 Thes. ii, 1, 2.) *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* The preposition, which is translated *by*, ought rather to have been translated *concerning*, as it signifies in other places of scripture, and in other authors both Greek and Latin. *Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him.* For he doth not beseech them by the coming of Christ, but the coming of Christ is the subject of which he is treating; and it is in relation to this subject, that he desires them not to be disturbed or affrighted, neither by revelation, nor by message, nor by letter, as from him, as if the day of Christ's coming was at hand.

The

The phrases of *the coming of Christ* and *the day of Christ* may be understood, either figuratively of his coming in judgment upon the Jews, or literally of his coming in glory to judge the world. Sometimes indeed they are used in the former sense, but they are more generally employed in the latter, by the writers of the New Testament: and the latter is the proper signification in this place, as the context will evince beyond contradiction. St. Paul himself had planted the church in Thessalonica; and it consisted principally of converts from among the Gentile idolaters, because it is said (1 Thess. i. 9.) that they *turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God*. What occasion was there therefore to admonish them particularly of the destruction of Jerusalem? Or, why should they be under such agitations and terrors upon that account? What connexion had Macedonia with Judea, or Thessalonica with Jerusalem? What share were the Christian converts to have in the calamities of the rebellious and unbelieving Jews; and why should they not rather have been comforted than troubled at the punishment of their inveterate enemies? Besides, how could the apostle deny that the destruction of the Jews was at hand, when it was at hand, as he saith himself, (1 Thess. ii. 16.) and *the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost*? He knew, and they knew, for our Saviour had declared, that the destruction of Jerusalem would come to pass *in that generation*: and what a ridiculous comfort must it be to tell them, that it would not happen immediately, but would be accomplished within less than twenty years? The phrases therefore of *the coming of Christ* and *the day of Christ* cannot in this place relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, but must necessarily be taken in the more general acceptation of his coming to judge the world. So the phrase is constantly used in the former epistle. In one place the apostle saith, (ii. 19.) *What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* In another place he wisheth, (iii. 13.) that *the Lord may stablish their hearts*.

hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints : And in a third place he prayeth, (v. 23.) that their whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. These texts evidently refer to the general judgment: and if the phrase be constantly so employed in the former Epistle, why should it not be taken after the same manner in this Epistle? In the former Epistle the apostle had exhorted the Thessalonians to moderate sorrow for the dead by the consideration of the resurrection and the general judgment. (iv. 13, &c.)

I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. But of the times and seasons of these things, as he proceeds, (ver. 1, 2.)

brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Some persons having mistaken the apostle's meaning, and having inferred from some of these expressions, that the end of the world was now approaching, and the day of Christ was at hand, the apostle sets himself in this place to rectify that mistaken notion: and it is with reference to this coming of Christ, to this day of the Lord, to this our gathering together unto him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, that he beseeches the Thessalonians not to be shaken from their steadfastness, nor to be troubled and terrified, as if it was now at hand.

Nothing

Nothing then can be more evident and undeniable, than that the coming of Christ here intended is his second coming in glory to judge the world : and of this his second coming the apostle had spoken before, in this same Epistle, and in the chapter before this. (ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.) *It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you ; And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power ; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.*

It was a point of great importance for the Thessalonians not to be mistaken in this particular ; because if they were taught to believe that the coming of Christ was at hand, and he should not come according to their expectation, they might be staggered in their faith, and finding part of their creed to be false, might be hasty enough to conclude that the whole was so. The apostle therefore cautions them in the strongest manner against this delusion ; and assures them that other memorable events will take place before the coming of our Lord. (ver. 3 and 4.) *Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The day of Christ shall not come, except there come the apostasy first.* The apostasy here described is plainly not of a civil, but of a religious nature ; not a revolt from the government, but a defection from the true religion and worship, *a departing from the faith,* (1 Tim. iv. 1.) *a departing from the living God,* (Heb. iii. 12) If then the notion of *the man of sin* be derived from any

any antient prophet, it must be derived from Daniel, who hath described the like arrogant and tyrannical power: (vii. 25.) *He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws:* and again (xi. 36.) *The king shall do according to his will and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every God, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of Gods.* Any man may be satisfied, that St. Paul alluded to this description by Daniel; because he hath not only borrowed the ideas, but hath even adopted some of the phrases and expressions. *The man of sin* may signify either a single man, or a succession of men. A succession of men being meant in Daniel, it is probable, that the same was intended here also. It is the more probable, because a single man appears hardly sufficient for the work here assigned: and it is agreeable to the phraseology of scripture, and especially to that of the prophets, to speak of a body or number of men under the character of one. Thus a *king* (Dan. vii. viii. Rev. xvii.) is often used for a succession of kings, and *the high priest* (Heb. ix. 7, 25.) for the series and order of high priests. A single beast (Dan. vii. viii. Rev. xiii.) often represents a whole empire or kingdom in all its changes and revolutions from the beginning to the end. The *woman clothed with the sun* (Rev. xii. 1.) is designed as an emblem of the true church; as the *woman arrayed in purple and scarlet* (Rev. xvii. 4.) is a portrait of a corrupt communion. No commentator ever conceived *the whore of Babylon* to be meant of a single woman; and why then should *the man of sin* be taken for a single man? *The man of sin* seemeth to be expressed from Daniel (vii. 24.) *he shall exceed in evil all who went before him:* and he may fulfil the character either by promoting wickedness in general, or by advancing idolatry in particular, as the word *sin* frequently signifies in scripture. *The son of perdition* is also the denomination of the traitor Judas, (John xvii. 12.) which implies that *the man of sin* should be, like

like Judas, a false apostle, like him betray Christ, and like him be devoted to destruction. *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped*: this is manifestly copied from Daniel, *He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every God, and speak marvelous things against the God of Gods*. The features, you see, exactly resemble each other. He *opposeth and exalteth himself above all, above every one, that is called God or that is worshipped*, alluding to the title of the Roman emperors, *august* or venerable. He shall oppose, for the prophets speak of things future as present; he shall oppose, and exalt himself not only above inferior magistrates, who are sometimes called *Gods* in holy writ, but even above the greatest emperors, and shall arrogate to himself divine honors. *So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*: By *the temple of God* the apostle could not well mean the temple at Jerusalem, because that he knew very well would be totally destroyed within a few years. It is an observation of the learned Bochart, that after the death of Christ the temple at Jerusalem is never called by the apostles the temple of God; and if at any time they make mention of *the house or temple of God*, they mean the church in general, or every particular believer. It is certain, *the temple or house of God* is the Christian church in the usual stile of the apostles. St. Paul thus addresseth the Corinthians in his first Epistle, (iii. 16, 17.) *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are: and thus again in his second Epistle, (vi. 16.) What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God*. He adviseth Timothy (1 Tim. iii. 15.) *how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, as a pillar and ground of the truth*. St. John also writeth thus to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, (Rev. iii. 12.) *Him*

that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. These few examples out of many are sufficient to prove, that under the gospel dispensation *the temple of God* is the church of Christ: and *the man of sin's sitting* implies his ruling and presiding there, and *sitting there as God* implies his claiming divine authority in things spiritual as well as temporal, and *showing himself that he is God* implies his doing it with great pride and pomp, with great parade and ostentation.

These things were not asserted now merely to serve the present occasion. The apostle had insisted upon these topics, while he was at Thessalonica: so that he thought it a part of his duty, as he made it a part of his preaching and doctrine, to forewarn his new converts of the grand apostasy that would infest the church. (ver. 5, 6, 7.) *Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let until he be taken out of the way.* The man of sin therefore was not then revealed. His time was not yet come, or the season for his manifestation. *The mystery of iniquity* was indeed *already working*: for there is a *mystery of iniquity* as well as a *mystery of godliness*, (1 Tim. iii. 16.) the one in direct opposition to the other. The seeds of corruption were sown, but they were not yet grown up to any maturity. The leaven was fermenting in some parts, but it was far from having infected the whole mass. *The man of sin* was yet hardly conceived in the womb; it must be some time before he could be brought forth. There was some obstacle that hindered his appearance, the apostle speaketh doubtfully whether thing or person: and this obstacle would continue to hinder, till it was taken out of the way. What this was we cannot determine with absolute certainty at so great a distance of time; but if we may rely upon the concurrent testimonies of the fathers, it was the Roman empire. Most probably it was somewhat relating

lating to the higher powers, because the apostle observes such caution. He mentioned it in discourse, but would not commit it to writing. He afterwards exhorts the Thessalonians, (ver. 15.) *Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught whether by word or our epistle.* This was one of the traditions which he thought more proper to teach by word than by epistle.

When this obstacle shall be removed, *then*, as the apostle proceeds, (ver. 8.) *shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.* Nothing can be plainer than that *the lawless, the wicked one* here mentioned and *the man of sin* must be one and the same person. The apostle was speaking before of what hindered that he should be revealed, and would continue to hinder until it was taken out of the way; *And then shall the wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume, &c.* Not that he should be consumed immediately after he was revealed; but the apostle, to comfort the Thessalonians, no sooner mentions his revelation, than he foretells also his destruction, even before he describes his other qualifications. His other qualifications should have been described first in order of time, but the apostle hastens to what was first and warmest in his thoughts and wishes. *Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.* If these two clauses refer to two distinct and different events, the meaning manifestly is, that the Lord Jesus shall gradually consume him with the free preaching and publication of his word, and shall utterly destroy him at his second coming in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. If these two clauses relate to one and the same event, it is a pleonism that is very usual in the sacred as well as in the oriental writings; and the purport plainly is, that the Lord Jesus shall destroy him with the greatest facility, *when he shall be revealed from heaven* (as the apostle hath expressed it in the preceding chapter) *with*

his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle was eager to foretel the destruction of the man of sin; and for this purpose having broken in upon his subject, he now returns to it again, and describes the other qualifications, by which this wicked one should advance and establish himself in the world. He should rise to credit and authority by the most diabolical methods, should pretend to supernatural powers, and boast of revelations, visions, and miracles, false in themselves, and applied to promote false doctrines. (ver. 9.) *Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.* He should likewise practise all other wicked arts of deceit, should be guilty of the most impious frauds and impositions upon mankind; but should prevail only among those who are destitute of a sincere affection for the truth, whereby they might obtain eternal salvation. (ver. 10.) *And with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* And indeed it is a just and righteous judgment of God, to give *them* over to vanities and lies in this world, and to condemnation in the next, who have no regard for truth and virtue, but delight in falsehood and wickedness. (ver. 11 and 12.) *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

The Thessalonians, from some expressions in the former Epistle, were alarmed as if the end of the world was at hand, and Christ was coming to judgment. The apostle, to correct their mistakes and dissipate their fears, assures them, that the coming of Christ will not be yet awhile; there will be first a great apostasy or defection of Christians from the true faith and worship. This apostasy all the concurrent marks and characters will justify us in charging upon the church

church of Rome. The apostle mentions this apostasy in another place, (1 Tim. iv. 1, &c.) and specifies some articles, as *doctrines of demons, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats*, which will warrant the same conclusion. The true Christian worship is the worship of *the one only God* through *the one only mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*: and from this worship the church of Rome hath notoriously departed by substituting other mediators, and invoking and adoring saints and angels. Nothing is an apostasy, if idolatry be not; and the same kind of idolatry is practised in the church of Rome, that the prophets and inspired writers arraign and condemn as apostasy and rebellion in the Jewish church. The Jews never totally rejected the true God, but only worshipped him through the medium of some image, or in conjunction with some other beings: and are not the members of the church of Rome * guilty of the same idolatry and apostasy in the worship of images, in the adoration of the host, in the invocation of angels and saints, and in the oblation of prayers and praises to the virgin Mary, as much or more than to God blessed for ever? This is the grand corruption of the Christian church, this is *the apostasy* as it is emphatically called, and deserves to be called, *the apostacy* that the apostle had warned the Thessalonians of before, *the apostasy* that had also been foretold by the prophet Daniel.

If the apostasy be rightly charged upon the church of Rome, it follows of consequence that *the man of sin* is the pope, not meaning this or that pope in particular, but the pope in general, as the chief head and supporter of this apostasy. The apostasy produces him, and he again promotes the apostasy. He is properly *the man of sin*, not only on account of the scandalous lives of many popes, but by reason of their more scandalous doctrines and principles, dispensing with the most necessary duties, and granting or rather selling pardons

* See Stillingfleet's Discourse concerning the idolatry of the church of Rome. Chap. 1 and 2. vol. v. of his works.

dons and indulgences to the most abominable crimes. Or if by *sin* be meant idolatry particularly as in the Old Testament, it is evident to all how he hath corrupted the worship of God, and perverted it from *spirit and truth* to superstition and idolatry of the grossest kind. He also, like the false apostle Judas, is *the son of perdition*, whether actively as being the cause and occasion of destruction to others, or passively as being destined and devoted to destruction himself. *He opposeth*; he is the great adversary to God and man, excommunicating and anathematizing, persecuting and destroying by croisadoes and inquisitions, by massacres and horrid executions, those sincere Christians, who prefer the word of God to all the authority of men. The Heathen emperor of Rome may have slain his thousands of innocent Christians, but the Christian bishop of Rome hath slain his ten thousands. There is scarce any country, that hath not at one time or other been made the stage of these bloody tragedies: scarce any age, that hath not in one place or other seen them acted. *He exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped*; not only above inferior magistrates, but likewise above bishops and primates, exerting an absolute jurisdiction and uncontrolled supremacy over all; not only above bishops and primates, but likewise above kings and emperors, deposing some, and advancing others, obliging them to prostrate themselves before him, to kiss his toe, to hold his stirrup, to * wait bare-footed at his gate, treading even upon the neck, and kicking off the imperial crown with his foot; not only above kings and emperors, but likewise above Christ and God himself, *making the word of God of none effect by his traditions, forbidding* what God had commanded, as *marriage*, communion in both kinds, the use of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, and the like, and also commanding or allowing what God hath forbidden, as idolatry, persecution, works of supererogation, and various other instances. *So that he as God sitteth in the*

* As Hildebrand or Gregory VII. did to Henry IV.

the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. He is therefore in profession a Christian, and a Christian bishop. His *sitting in the temple of God* plainly implies his having his seat or cathedra in the Christian church: and he sitteth there *as God*, especially at his inauguration, when he sitteth upon the high altar in St. Peter's church, and maketh the table of the Lord his footstool, and in that position receiveth adoration. At all times he exerciseth divine authority in the church, *showing himself that he is God*, affecting divine titles and attributes as holiness and infallibility, assuming divine powers and prerogatives in condemning and absolving men, in retaining and forgiving sins, in asserting his decrees to be of the same or greater authority than the word of God, and commanding them to be received under the penalty of the same or greater damnation. Like another Salmoneus he is proud to imitate the state and thunder of the Almighty; and is stiled, and pleased to be * stiled, "Our Lord God the pope; another God upon earth; king of kings, and lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and the pope. To believe that our Lord God the pope might not decree, as he decreed, it were a matter of heresy. The power of the pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more than God." Such blasphemies are not only allowed, but are even approved, encouraged, rewarded in the writers of the church of Rome; and they are not only the extravagances of private writers, but are the lan-

* Dominus Deus noster papa. Alter Deus in terra. Rex regum, dominus dominorum. Idem est dominium Dei et papæ. Credere Dominum Deum nostrum papam non potuisse statuere, prout statuit, hæreticum censeretur. Papæ potestas est major omni potestate creata, extenditque se ad cœlestia, terrestria, et infernaliam. Papa facit quicquid libet, etiam illicita, et est plus quam Deus. See these and the like instances quoted in Bishop Jewel's Apology and Defence, in Downham's treatise de Antichristo, and Poole's English Annotations. See likewise Barrow's treatise of the Pope's supremacy in the Introduction.

guage even of public decretals and acts of councils. So that the pope is evidently the God upon earth : at least there is no one like him, who *exalteth himself above every God* ; no one like him, who *sitteth as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

But if the bishop of Rome be *the man of sin*, it may seem somewhat strange that the apostle should mention these things in an epistle to the Thessalonians, and not rather in his Epistle to the Romans. But this Epistle was written four or five years before that to the Romans, and there was no occasion to mention the same things again in another epistle. What was written to the Thessalonians or any particular church, was in effect written to all the churches, the epistles being designed for general edification, and intended to be read publicly in the congregation of the faithful. When St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, he had not been at Rome, and consequently could not allude to any former discourse with them, as with the Thessalonians : and these things were not proper to be fully explained in a letter, and especially in a letter addressed to the Christian converts at the capital city of the empire. The apostles with all their prudence were represented as enemies to government, and were charged with *turning the world upside down* ; (Acts xvii. 6.) but the accusation would have been better grounded, if St. Paul had denounced openly, and to Romans too, the destruction of the Roman empire. However he admonisheth them to beware of apostasy, (Rom. xi. 20, 22.) and to *continue in God's goodness*, or *otherwise they should be cut off* : and afterwards when he visited Rome, and dwelt there *two whole years*, (Acts xviii. 30.) he might have frequent opportunities of informing them particularly of these things. It is not to be supposed, that he discoursed of these things only to the Thessalonians. It was a matter of concern to all Christians to be forewarned of the great corruption of Christianity, that they might be neither surpris'd into it, nor offended at it ; and the caution was the more necessary, as *the mystery*
of

of iniquity was already working. The seeds of popery were sown in the apostle's time; for even then idolatry was stealing into the church, (1 Cor. x. 14.) and a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, (Col. ii. 18.) strife and divisions, (1 Cor. iii. 3.) an adulterating and handling the word of God deceitfully, (2 Cor. ii. 17. iv. 2.) a gain of godliness, and teaching of things for filthy lucre's sake, (1 Tim. vi. 5. Tit. i. 11.) a vain observation of festivals, (Gal. iv. 10.) a vain distinction of meats, (1 Cor. viii. 8.) a neglecting of the body, (Col. ii. 23.) traditions, and commandments, and doctrines of men, (Col. ii. 8, 22.) with other corruptions and innovations. All heretics were in a manner the forerunners of *the man of sin*; and Simón Magus in particular was so lively a type and figure of *the wicked one*, that he hath been mistaken for *the wicked one* himself.

The foundations of popery were laid in the apostle's days, but the superstructure was raised by degrees, and several ages passed before the building was completed, and *the man of sin* was revealed in full perfection. St. Paul having communicated to the Thessalonians what it was that hindered his appearance, it was natural for other Christians also who read this Epistle, to inquire *what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time*; and the apostle without doubt would impart it to other Christians as freely as to the Thessalonians; and the Thessalonians and other Christians might deliver it to their successors, and so the tradition might generally prevail, and the tradition that generally prevailed was that what hindered was the Roman empire: and therefore the primitive Christians in the public offices of the church prayed for its peace and welfare, as knowing that when the Roman empire should be dissolved and broken into pieces, the empire of *the man of sin* would be raised on its ruins. How this revolution was effected, no writer can better inform us than * Machiavel. “The emperor

* Machiavel's Hist. of Florence Book i. p. 6, &c. of the English translation.

peror of Rome quitting Rome to hold his residence at Constantinople, the Roman empire began to decline, but the church of Rome augmented as fast. Nevertheless, until the coming of the Lombards, all Italy being under the dominion either of emperors or kings, the bishops assumed no more power than what was due to their doctrine and manners; in civil affairs they were subject to the civil power.—But Theodoric king of the Goths fixing his seat at Ravenna, was that which advanced their interest, and made them more considerable in Italy; for there being no other prince left in Rome, the Romans were forced for protection to pay greater allegiance to the pope. And yet their authority advanced no farther at that time, than to obtain the preference before the church of Ravenna. But the Lombards having invaded, and reduced Italy into several cantons, the pope took the opportunity, and began to hold up his head. For being as it were governor and principal at Rome, the emperor of Constantinople and the Lombards bare him a respect, so that the Romans (by mediation of their pope) began to treat and confederate with Longinus [the emperor's lieutenant] and the Lombards, not as subjects, but as equals and companions; which said custom continuing, and the popes entering into alliance sometimes with the Lombards, and sometimes with the Greeks, contracted great reputation to their dignity. But the destruction of the eastern empire following so close under the reign of the emperor Heracleus,—the pope lost the convenience of the emperor's protection in time of adversity, and the power of the Lombards increasing too fast on the other side, he thought it but necessary to address himself to the king of France for assistance.—Gregory the third being created pope, and Aistolfus king of the Lombards, Aistolfus contrary to league and agreement seized upon Ravenna, and made war upon the pope. Gregory not daring (for the reasons aforesaid) to depend upon the weakness of the empire, or the fidelity of the Lombards, (whom he had already found false)

applied

applied himself to Pepin—for relief against the Lombards. Pepin returned answer, that he would be ready to assist him, but he desired first to have the honor to see him, and pay his personal respects. Upon which invitation pope Gregory went into France, passing thorough the Lombards quarters without any interruption, so great reverence they bare to religion in those days. Being arrived and honourably received in France, he was after some time dismissed with an army into Italy; which having besieged Pavia, and reduced the Lombards to distress, Aistolfus was constrained to certain terms of agreement with the French, which were obtained by the intercession of the pope.—Among the rest of the articles of that treaty it was agreed, that Aistolfus should restore all the lands he had usurped from the church. But when the French army was returned into France, Aistolfus forgot his engagement, which put the pope upon a second application to king Pepin, who supplied him again, sent a new army into Italy, overcame the Lombards, and possessed himself of Ravenna, and (contrary to the desire of the Grecian emperor) gave it to the pope, with all the lands under that exarchate.—In the interim Aistolfus died, and Desiderio a Lombard, and duke of Tuscany, taking up arms to succeed him, begged assistance of the pope, with promise of perpetual amity for the future.—At first Desiderio was very punctual,—delivering up the towns as he took them to the pope, according to his engagement to king Pepin; nor was there any exarch sent afterwards from Constantinople to Ravenna, but was arbitrary, and managed according to the pleasure of the pope. Not long after Pepin died, and Charles his son succeeded in the government, who was called the great from the greatness of his exploits. About the same time Theodore the first was advanced to the papacy, and falling out with Desiderio was besieged by him in Rome. In his exigence the pope had recourse to the king of France, (as his predecessor had done before him) and Charles not only supplied him with an army, but marching
over

over the Alps at the head of it himself, he besieged Desiderio in Pavia, took him and his son in it, sent them both prisoners into France, and went in person to Rome to visit the pope, where he adjudged and determined, *that his holiness being God's vicar, could not be subject to the judgment of man.* For which the pope and people together declared him emperor, and Rome began again to have an emperor of the west: and whereas formerly the popes were confirmed by the emperors, the emperor now in his election was to be beholding to the pope; by which means the power and dignity of the empire declined, and the church began to advance, and by these steps to usurp upon the authority of temporal princes."

In this manner the emperor of Rome, or *he who letteth*, was taken out of the way, and the bishop of Rome was advanced in his stead. In the same proportion as the power of the empire decreased, the authority of the church increased, the latter at the expence and ruin of the former; till at length the pope grew up above all, and *the wicked one* was fully manifested and revealed, or *the lawless one* as he may be called; for the pope is declared again and again not to be bound by any law of God or man. *His coming is after the energy of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness:* and doth it require any particular proof, or is it not too generally known, that the pretensions of the pope, and the corruptions of the church of Rome are all supported and authorised by feigned visions and miracles, by pious frauds and impostures of every kind? Bellarmin reckons the glory of miracles as the eleventh note of the catholic church: but the apostle assigns them as a distinguishing mark and character of *the man of sin*. The church of Rome pretends to miracles, Mohammed disclaims them; and this is one very good reason, why *the man of sin* is the pope rather than the Turk. There hath been printed at London, so lately as in the year 1756, a book intitled, *The miraculous powers of the church of Christ asserted through*

through each successive century from the apostles down to the present time : and from thence the author draweth the conclusion, that the catholic church is the true church of Christ. They must certainly *not receive the love of the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness*, who can believe such fabulous and ridiculous legends, who hold it a mortal sin but to doubt of any article of their religion, who deny the free exercise of private judgment, who take away the free use of the holy scriptures, and so *shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither going in themselves, neither suffering them, who were entering, to go in*. If they will still maintain their miracles to be true, yet they are no proof of the true church, but rather of the contrary. They are the miracles here predicted, and if they were really wrought, were wrought in favour of falsehood : and indeed it is a proper retaliation, that God in his just judgments *should send men strong delusion that they should believe a lie, who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved* ; a proper retaliation, that he should suffer some real miracles to be wrought to deceive those, who have counterfeited so many miracles to deceive others.

But how much soever *the man of sin* may be exalted, and how long soever he may reign, yet at last *the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming*. This is partly taken from the prophet Isaiah, (xi. 4.) *and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked one* : where the Jews, as Lightfoot observes, “ put an emphasis upon that word in the prophet *the wicked one*, as it appeareth by the Chaldee paraphrast, who hath uttered it *He shall destroy the wicked Roman*.” If the two clauses, as it was said before, relate to two different events, the meaning manifestly is, that the Lord Jesus shall gradually consume him with the free preaching of his gospel, and shall utterly destroy him at his second coming in the glory of his Father. The former began to take effect at the Reformation, and the latter will be accomplished in
God's

God's appointed time. *The man of sin* is now upon the decline, and he will be totally abolished, when Christ shall come in judgment. The kingdom of falsehood and sin shall end, and the reign of truth and virtue shall succeed. *Great is the truth, and will at last prevail.*

The man of sin then is the same arbitrary and wicked power that is described by Daniel under the characters of *the little horn* and *the mighty king*. In St. Paul he is *revealed*, when the Roman empire is *taken out of the way*; and in Daniel the Roman empire is first broken into several kingdoms, and he *cometh up among them*. In St. Paul he *opposeth*; and in Daniel he *doeth according to his will*, and *weareth out the saints of the most High*. In St. Paul he *exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped*, showing himself that he is God: and in Daniel he *exalteth himself and magnifieth himself above every God*, and *speaketh marvelous things against the God of Gods*. In St. Paul he is *the lawless one*; and in Daniel he *changeth times and laws*. In St. Paul his coming is *with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*; and in Daniel he *practiseth and prospereth*, and *through his policy causeth craft to prosper in his land*. According to St. Paul *the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of his mouth*, and *shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming*; and according to Daniel *a fiery stream shall issue and come forth from the judge*, and *his body shall be given to the burning flame*, and *they shall take away his dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end*. The characters and circumstances are so much the same, that they must belong to one and the same person.

The tyrannical power thus described by Daniel and St. Paul, and afterwards by St. John, is both by antients and moderns generally denominated *Antichrist*: and the name is proper and expressive enough, as it may signify both *the enemy of Christ*, and *the vicar of Christ*: and no one is more the enemy of Christ than he who arrogates his name and power, as no one more

more directly opposes the king than he who assumes his title and authority. The name began to prevail in St. John's time. For he addresseth himself to the Christians as having heard of the coming of Antichrist, and calleth the heretics of his time by the same common name: (1 Ep. ii. 18, 22.) *As ye have heard that the Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists: Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? he is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.* As St. Paul hath said, *The mystery of iniquity doth already work: so St. John speaketh of the spirit of Antichrist as then in the world; (iv. 3.) This is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.* Afterwards (2 Ep. 7, 8.) he stileth him emphatically *the deceiver and the Antichrist*, and warneth the Christians to look to themselves. The fathers too speak of *Antichrist* and of *the man of sin* as one and the same person; and give much the same interpretation that hath here been given of the whole passage: only it is not to be supposed, that they who wrote before the events, could be so very exact in the application of each particular, as those who have the advantage of writing after the events, and of comparing the prophecy and completion together.

Justin Martyr, who flourished before the middle of the second century, considers *the man of sin*, or as he elsewhere calleth him *the man of blasphemy*, as altogether the same with *the little horn* in Daniel; and affirms that he, who shall speak blasphemous words against the most High is now at the doors. Irenæus, who lived in the same century hath written a whole chapter of the fraud, and pride, and tyrannical reign of Antichrist, as they are described by Daniel and St. Paul in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Tertullian, who became famous at the latter end of the same century, expounding those words *only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way*, says, "Who can this be but the Roman state, the division

division of which into ten kingdoms will bring on Antichrist, and then the wicked one shall be revealed." And in his Apology he assigns it as a particular reason why the Christians prayed for the Roman empire, because they knew that the greatest calamity hanging over the world was retarded by the continuance of it.

Origen, the most learned father and ablest writer of the third century, recites this passage at large as spoken of him who is called Antichrist. To the same purpose he likewise alledges the words of Daniel as truly divine and prophetic. Daniel and St. Paul, according to him, both prophesied of the same person.

Lactantius, who flourished in the beginning of the fourth century, describes Antichrist in the same manner, and almost in the same terms as St. Paul; and concludes "This is he, who is called Antichrist, but shall feign himself to be Christ, and shall fight against the truth." A shorter and fuller character of the vicar of Christ could not be drawn even by a protestant, Cyril of Jerusalem in the same century alledges this passage of St. Paul together with other prophecies concerning Antichrist, and says that "This the predicted Antichrist will come, when the times of the Roman empire shall be fulfilled, and the consummation of the world shall approach. Ten kings of the Romans shall arise together, in different places indeed, but they shall reign at the same time. Among these the eleventh is Antichrist, who by magical and wicked artifice shall seize the Roman power." Ambrose archbishop of Milan in the same century, or Hilary the deacon, or the author (whoever he was) of the comment upon St. Paul's epistles, which passeth under the name of St. Ambrose, proposes much the same interpretation, and affirms that after the falling or decay of the Roman empire, Antichrist shall appear.

Jerome, Austin, and Chrysostome flourished in the latter end of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth century. St. Jerome in his explanation of this passage says, that "Antichrist shall sit in the temple of God,

God, either at Jerusalem (as some imagine) or in the church (as we more truly judge) showing himself that he is Christ and the Son of God : and unless the Roman empire be first desolated, and Antichrist precede, Christ shall not come.—*And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time*, that is, ye know very well, what is the reason, why Antichrist doth not come at present. He is not willing to say openly, that the Roman empire should be destroyed, which they who command think to be eternal.—For if he had said openly and boldly, that Antichrist shall not come, unless the Roman empire be first destroyed, it might probably have proved the occasion of a persecution against the church.” Jerome was himself a witness to the barbarous nations beginning to tear in pieces the Roman empire, and upon this occasion he exclaims “ He who hindered is taken out of the way, and we do not consider that Antichrist approaches, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the spirit of his mouth.” St. Austin having cited this passage affirms, that “ No one questions that the apostle spoke these things concerning Antichrist ; and the day of judgment (for this he calleth the day of the Lord) should not come, unless Antichrist come first.—*And now ye know what withholdeth*.—Some think this was spoken of the Roman empire ; and therefore the apostle was not willing to write it openly, lest he should incur a præmunire, and be falsely accused of wishing ill to the Roman empire, which was hoped to be eternal.” St. Chrysostome, in one of his homilies upon this passage, speaking of what hindered the revelation of Antichrist, asserts that “ when the Roman empire shall be taken out of the way, then he shall come : and it is very likely : for as long as the dread of this empire shall remain, no one shall quickly be substituted ; but when this shall be dissolved, he shall seize on the vacant empire, and shall endeavour to assume the power both of God and men.” And who hath seized on the vacant empire

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in Rome, and assumed the power both of God and man, let the world judge.

In this manner these antient and venerable fathers expound this passage; and in all probability they had learned by tradition from the apostle, or from the church of the Thessalonians, that what retarded the revelation of Antichrist was the Roman empire, but when the Roman empire should be broken in pieces, and be no longer able to withhold him, then he should appear in the Christian church, and domineer principally in the church of Rome. Even in the opinion of a bishop of Rome, Gregory the great, who sat in the chair at the end of the sixth century, whosoever affected the title of universal bishop, he was Antichrist, or the forerunner of Antichrist. "I speak it confidently, says he, that whosoever calleth himself universal bishop, or desireth so to be called, in the pride of his heart he doth forerun Antichrist." When John, then bishop of Constantinople, first usurped this title, Gregory made answer, "By this pride of his, what thing else is signified, but that the time of Antichrist is now at hand?" Again he says upon the same occasion, "the king of pride (that is Antichrist) approacheth; and what is wicked to be spoken, an army of priests is prepared." When the papal doctrines and the papal authority prevailed over all, it was natural to think and expect, that the true notion of Antichrist would be stifled, and that the doctors of the church would endeavour to give another turn and interpretation to this passage. That night of ignorance was so thick and dark, that there was hardly here and there a single star to be seen in the hemisphere. But no sooner was there any glimmering or dawning of a reformation, than the true notion of Antichrist, which had been so long suppressed, broke out again. As early as the year 1120 a treatise was published concerning Antichrist, wherein the faithful are admonished, that "the great Antichrist was long ago come, in vain was he still expected, he was now
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by the permission of God advanced in years :” and the author, having described the corrupt state of the church at that time, says afterwards, “ This state of men (not a single man) is Antichrist, the whore of Babylon, the fourth beast of Daniel, (to wit in his last state as it is said) that man of sin and son of perdition, who is exalted above every God, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, that is, the church, showing himself that he is God ; who is now come with all kind of seduction and lies in those who perish.” The Waldenses and Albigenes propagated the same opinions in the same century. That the pope was Antichrist was indeed the general doctrine of the first reformers every-where. Here in England it was advanced by Wickliff, and was learnedly established by that great and able champion of the Reformation, bishop Jewel, in his Apology and Defence, and more largely in his Exposition upon the two Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians. This doctrine contributed not a little to promote the Reformation ; and wheresoever the one prevailed, the other prevailed also.

Such doctrine as this must necessarily give great offence to the bigots and the devotees of the church of Rome : and no wonder therefore that in the last Lateran council the pope gave strait commandment to all preachers that no man should presume once to speak of the coming of Antichrist. The king of France also with the advice of his council interdicted, that any one should call the pope Antichrist : and Grotius, who was ambassador in France from the crown of Sweden, in a vain hope and expectation of reconciling the disputes and differences between papists and protestants, composed his treatise concerning Antichrist, not wickedly, but weakly ; with an honest intention it may be presumed, but it is certain with pernicious effect ; more like an advocate for one party, than a moderator between both. At the same time in England, tho’ James the first had written a treatise to prove the pope Antichrist, yet this doctrine was growing unfashionable during his reign, and more so in that of his son

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who married a bigotted popish princess; even while Mr. Mede was living, who had exerted more learning and sagacity in explaining the prophecies, and in fixing the true idea of Antichrist, than perhaps any writer in any age. But probably for this very reason he was looked upon with an evil eye, and (to the disgrace of the times) obtained no preferment, tho' he was eminently deserving of the best and greatest. He says himself in one of his letters (Epist. 56.) that his notions about genuflexion towards the altar "would have made another man a dean, or a prebend, or something else ere this: but the point of the pope's being Antichrist, as a dead fly, marred the favor of that ointment." The abuse also that some fanatics made of this doctrine greatly prejudiced the world against it. It was esteemed a mark of a puritan, and was a certain obstacle to preferment, for any man to preach that the pope was Antichrist: and Dr. Montague, a famous court-chaplain at that time, who endeavoured to prove that the power of the king was absolute, endeavoured also to prove that the notes and characters of Antichrist belonged to the Turk rather than to the pope: and herein he was followed by several divines, and by no less a man than bishop Fell, if he was the compiler or approver (as he is commonly said to have been) of the Paraphrase and Annotations upon all St. Paul's Epistles. There are fashions in divinity as well as in every thing else; and therefore the true doctrine of Antichrist was for some time suspended, and false hypotheses invented; and it may surprise any one, that so little was said upon this subject in the long controversies concerning popery during the reigns of Charles and James the second. It is hoped that the truth is now emerging again. Some laudable * attempts have lately been made to revive and restore it: And if I have not proved that this in-

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* Mr. Langford's Notes and Characters of the Man of Sin. Printed in 1746. Dr. Benson's Dissertation concerning the Man of Sin, &c. &c.

terpretation is preferable to all others, I have taken pains, and proved nothing.

But it hath been proved, as I conceive, that this is the genuine sense and meaning of the apostle, that this only is entirely consistent with the context, that every other interpretation is forced and unnatural, that this is liable to no material objection, that it coincides perfectly with Daniel, that it is agreeable to the tradition of the primitive church, and that it hath been exactly fulfilled in all particulars, which cannot be said of any other interpretation whatsoever. Such a prophecy as this is at once an illustrious proof of divine revelation, and an excellent antidote to the poison of popery. It is like a two-edged sword, that will cut both ways, and wound the deist with one side, and the papist with the other. The papists are in some respect like the Jews. As the Jews believe not that Christ is come according to the prophecies, but still live in expectation of him; so neither do the papists perceive that Antichrist is come according to the prophecies, but still maintain that he will arise hereafter. The apostle not only foretels this blindness and infatuation, but likewise assigns the reason, *because they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. But to the protestants, who believe and profess that both the Christ and Antichrist are come, we may say with the apostle (ver. 13, 14.) *We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you to salvation, thro' sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by the gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The apostle proceeds (ver. 15.) *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle*: and certainly there is not any oral tradition that hath a juster claim to be thought apostolical, than this of *the man of sin's* succeeding upon the decline of the Roman empire, and exalting himself over all. Wherefore to conclude, as the apostle concludes the subject, (ver. 16, 17.) *Now*

our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

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V.

St. PAUL's Prophecy of the Apostacy of the latter Times.

ST. Paul was a man of lively thought and strong imagination. None of the apostles had a warmer zeal for Christ and the Christian religion. He was, as he saith himself, (2 Cor. xi. 23, 28, 29.) *in labours more abundant; he had the care of all the churches; Who is weak, saith he, and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not?* It was natural for such a mind to be deeply affected with the foresight of the great apostasy of Christians from the true Christian faith and worship, and to lament it, and to forewarn his disciples of it, as often as there was occasion. He made this apostasy one topic of his discourse to the Thessalonians, while he was yet with them: and afterwards in his second Epistle to them, he gave them to understand that *the day of Christ was not at hand*, as they apprehended; *for there should come the apostasy first*; implying that it should be both extensive and of long duration. He mentions this apostasy again in his first Epistle to Timothy, and describes more particularly wherein it should consist, and at what time, and by what means it should be propagated and advanced in the world. (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.) *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to*

be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. The passage perhaps may better be translated thus, *But the Spirit speaketh expressly*; He had been speaking before of the mystery of godliness, and now he proceeds to speak of the mystery of iniquity in opposition to it, *But the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, giving heed to erroneous spirits and doctrines concerning demons, Through the hypocrisy of liars, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by the believers and them who know the truth.* This translation will be justified by the following considerations, wherein it is proposed to show the true interpretation and exact completion of this prophecy. But this subject hath been so fully and learnedly discussed by the excellent Mr. Mede, that we must be greatly obliged to him in the course of this dissertation. The dress and clothing may be somewhat different, but the body and substance must be much the same: and they must be referred to his works, who are desirous of obtaining farther satisfaction. Not that we would make a transcript only of any writer; we should hope to inforce and improve the subject by some new arguments and new illustrations; as *every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven* (Mat. xiii. 52.) *is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new as well as old.*

I. The first thing to be considered is the apostasy here predicted, *Some shall depart or rather shall apostatize from the faith.* The apostle had predicted the same thing before to the Thessalonians, *The day of Christ shall not come, except there come a falling away or rather the apostasy first.* An apostasy from the faith may be total or partial, either when we renounce the whole, or when we deny some principal and essential article of it. The writers of the New Testament frequently derive their language as well as their ideas

from the Old : and by considering what was accounted apostasy under the Mosaical œconomy, we may form the better notion of what it is under the Christian dispensation. It doth not appear that the Jews or Israelites ever totally renounced and abandoned the living and true God ; he never ceased altogether to be their God, or they to be his people : but they revolted from their allegiance to God, when they worshipped him in an image, as in the golden calves, which was the sin and apostasy of Jeroboam ; and when they worshipped other gods besides him, as Baalim and the host of heaven, which was the sin and apostasy of Ahab and Manasseh : and for the same reason the idolatry of Ahaz is by the Greek interpreters called (2 Chron. xxix. 19.) *his apostasy*, and it is said of him (xxviii. 19.) that *he apostatized greatly from the Lord*. Apostasy therefore was idolatry in the Jewish church, and it is the same in the Christian. This argument may receive some illustration from a similar passage in St. Peter ; (2 Pet. ii. 1.) *There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them*. As there were false prophets among the people of Israel, who seduced them to idolatry and the worshipping of other Gods besides the true God ; so there shall be false teachers among Christians, who by plausible pretences and imperceptible degrees shall bring in the like damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, professing themselves to be his servants bought with a price, and yet denying him to be their lord and master by applying to other lords and mediators. It is not every error, or every heresy, that is apostasy from the faith. It is a revolt in the principal and essential article, when we worship God by any image or representation, or when we worship other beings besides God, and pray unto other mediators besides *the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*. This is the very essence of Christian worship, to worship the one true God through the one true Christ ; and to worship any other God or any other mediator, is apostasy and rebellion.

bellion against God and against Christ. It is, as St. Paul saith, (Col. ii. 19.) *not holding the head*, but depending upon other heads: It is, as St. Peter expresseth it, *denying the Lord that bought us*, and serving other lords: and the denial of such an essential part may as properly be called *apostasy*, as if we were to renounce the whole Christian faith and worship. It is renouncing them in effect, and not treating and regarding God as God, or Christ as Christ.

Such is the nature of *apostasy from the faith*; and it is implied that this apostasy should be general, and infect great numbers. For though it be said only *Some shall apostatize*, yet by *some* in this place *many* are understood. The word *some* may usually denote *few* in English; but in the learned languages it frequently signifies a multitude, and there are abundant instances in scripture. In St. John's Gospel it is said (vi. 60.) that *Many of Jesus his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can bear it?* and again a little afterwards (ver. 66.) *Many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him*: but Jesus himself speaking of these *many* saith (ver. 64.) *There are some of you that believe not*; so that *some* are plainly the same as *many*. St. Paul speaking of the infidelity and rejection of the Jews saith, (Rom. xi. 17.) that *some of the branches are broken off*: but those *some*, it was evident, were the main body of the nation. The same apostle informs the Corinthians, (1 Cor. x. 5, 6.) that *With many of the Israelites God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness*: and their punishments were intended for examples to Christians. Wherefore he concludes (ver. 7.) *Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play*: where *some* are manifestly the same as *the people*. Again, (ver. 8.) *Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand*: where *some* are equivalent to *many thousands*. Again, (ver. 9.) *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of ser-*

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pents : where some are the same with much people ; for we read (Num. xxi. 6.) that the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people ; and they bit the people, and much people in Israel died. And again, (ver. 10.) Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer : where some are the same with all the congregation except Joshua and Caleb ; for we read (Num. xiv. 1, 2.) that All the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried ; and the people wept that night : And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron ; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in this wilderness : and they had their wish, for except Joshua and Caleb, they all died in the wilderness. Some therefore may signify many, but not all ; as the apostle speaketh elsewhere, (Heb. iii. 16.) For some when they had heard, did provoke ; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. The apostle might have the same meaning in this place ; and this apostasy may be general and extensive, and include many but not all. If only some few persons were to be concerned and engaged in it, it was scarcely an object worthy of prophecy : nor could that properly be pointed out as a peculiarity of the latter times, which is common to all times, for in all times there are some apostates or other. It must necessarily be a great apostasy ; and it is called, as it hath been shown, the apostasy by way of eminence and distinction ; but it would hardly have been distinguished in this emphatical manner, if only an inconsiderable number were to profess and embrace it. Other prophecies likewise intimate, that there should be a great and general corruption and apostasy in the Christian church ; and the event will also confirm us in our opinion. For we have seen and still see a great part of Christendom guilty of the same sort of apostasy and defection as the Israelites were in former times. As the Israelites worshipped God in the golden calf and golden calves ; for (Exod. xxxii. 5.) they proclaimed

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a feast to the lord, and said (ver. 4. and 1 Kings xii. 28.) *Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt* : so there are Christians who worship their creator and redeemer in an image, or in a crucifix, or in the sacramental bread. As the Israelites worshipped Baalim or departed heroes, and as the Psalmist saith (Psalm. cvi. 28.) *are the sacrifices of the dead* : so there are Christians who worship departed saints, and institute fasts and festivals, and offer up prayers and praises unto them. And as this apostasy overspread the church of Israel for many ages, so hath it for many ages too overspread the church of Christ. The apostasy therefore is the very same in both churches. The apostle foresaw and foretold it ; and upon the mention of Israel's provocation, very properly admonished the Christians to beware of the like infidelity and apostasy, (Heb. iii. 12.) *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing, or in apostatizing from the living God.*

II. It is more particularly shown, wherein this apostasy should consist, in the following words, *giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils*, or rather *giving heed to erroneous spirits and doctrines concerning demons*. For I conceive not the meaning to be, that this apostasy should proceed from the suggestion of evil spirits and instigation of devils. That would be no peculiar mark of distinction ; that might be said of any wickedness in general, as well as of this in particular. The means too by which this apostasy should be propagated, and the persons who should propagate it, are described afterwards ; so that this part is to be understood rather of things than of persons, rather of the matter wherein this apostasy should consist, than of the first teachers and authors of it. *Spirits* seem to be much the same in sense as *doctrines*, as Mr. Mede and other divines have observed the same word to be used also by St. John, (1 John iv. 1.) *Beloved, believe not every spirit, that is every doctrine, but try the spirits, that is the doctrines, whether they are of God ; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

Spirits

Spirits and *doctrines* therefore may be considered, the latter word as explanatory of the former : and *error* sometimes signifying *idolatry*, *erroneous doctrines* may comprehend *idolatrous*, as well as *false doctrines*. But it is still farther added for explanation, that these doctrines should be *doctrines of devils or of demons* ; where the genitive case is not to be taken actively, as if demons were the authors of these doctrines, but passively, as if demons were the subject of these doctrines. *The doctrine of the Lord* (Acts xiii. 12.) is the doctrine concerning him : *Then the deputy when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.* *The doctrines of baptisms* (Heb. vi. 2.) and of *laying on of hands*, and of *resurrection of the dead*, and of *eternal judgment*, are doctrines relating to all these particulars. And by the same construction, *doctrines of demons* are doctrines about and concerning demons. This is therefore a prophecy that the idolatrous theology of demons professed by the Gentiles should be revived among Christians. Christians should in process of time degenerate, and resemble the Gentiles as well as the apostate Jews. They should not only *apostatize* after the manner of the Jews, but should also *worship demons* after the manner of the Gentiles.

Demons, according to the theology of the Gentiles, were middle powers between the sovereign Gods and mortal men. So saith Plato, the most competent judge and the most consummate writer in these subjects ; * “ Every demon is a middle being between God and mortal man.” These demons were regarded as mediators and agents between the Gods and men. So saith Plato again, † “ God is not approached by man, but all the commerce and intercourse between Gods and men is by the mediation of demons. The demons, saith he, are interpreters and conveyers from men to the Gods, and from the Gods to men of the supplications and sacrifices on the one part, and of the commands and
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* Platonis Sympos. p. 202. Tom. 3. Edit. Serrani.

† Ibid. p. 202, 203.

rewards of sacrifices on the other." Apuleius, * a later philosopher, giveth the like description. " Demons are middle powers, by whom both our desires and desires pass unto the Gods ; they are carriers between men on earth and the Gods in heaven ; hence of prayers, thence of gifts ; they convey to and fro, hence petitions, thence supplies ; or they are interpreters on both sides, and bearers of salutations ; for it would not be, saith he, for the majesty of the celestial Gods to take care of these things." The whole is summed up by the said Apuleius † in few words, " All things are done by the will, power, and authority of the celestial Gods, but by the obedience, service, and ministry of the demons." Of these demons there were accounted two kinds. One kind of demons were the souls of men deified or canonized after death. So Hesiod, one of the most antient heathen writers, if not the most antient, describing that happy race of men, who lived in the first and golden age of the world, ‡ saith that " after this generation were dead, they were by the will of great Jupiter promoted to be demons, keepers of mortal men, observers of their good and evil works, givers of riches, &c. and this, saith he, is the royal honor that they enjoy." Plato concurs with Hesiod, and § asserts that " he and many other poets speak excellently, who affirm that when good men die, they attain great honor and dignity, and become demons." The same Plato in another place || maintains, that " all those who die valiantly in war are of Hesiod's golden generation, and are made demons ; and we ought for ever afterwards to serve and adore their sepulchres, as the sepulchres of demons. The same also we decree, whenever any of those, who were judged excellently good in life, die either of old age, or in any other manner." The other kind of demons were such as had never been the souls of men, nor ever dwelt

* Apuleius de Deo Socratis, p. 674, 677. Edit. Delph.

† Ibid. p. 675.

‡ Hesiod. Op. et Dier. lib. i. 120.

§ Platonis Cratylus, p. 398. tom. 1. edit. Serrani.

|| Plato de Repub. lib. 5. p. 468. tom. 2. edit. Serrani.

dwelt in mortal bodies. Thus Apuleius * informs us, "There is another and higher kind of demons, who were always free from the incumbrances of the body; and out of this higher order Plato supposeth that guardians were appointed unto men." Ammonius likewise in Plutarch † reckons two kinds of demons, "souls separated from bodies, or such as had never inhabited bodies at all." These latter demons may be paralleled with angels, as the former may with canonized saints; and as we Christians believe that there are good and evil angels, so did the Gentiles that there were good and evil demons. According to Plutarch, ‡ it was a very antient opinion, that there are certain wicked and malignant demons, who envy good men, and endeavour to hinder them in the pursuit of virtue, lest they should be partakers at last of greater happiness than they enjoy." At least this was the opinion of all the later philosophers.

But here it is objected, that tho' this might be the notion of Gentiles concerning demons, yet the scripture-account of them is very different: for in the scriptures, as St. Austin observes, we never read of good demons; but wheresoever in these writings the name of demon occurs, none but evil spirits are meant: and it must be confessed and allowed, that this is the most usual signification of the word; but some instances may be alleged to the contrary, When St. Paul was at Athens, and preached the gospel in that city, *certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered him* (Acts xvii. 18.) and charged him with being *a setter forth of strange gods*, or as it is expressed in the Greek, *of strange demons, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.* Here demons cannot possibly signify devils but must necessarily refer to Jesus, who according to Paul's preaching (ver. 31.) was *raised from the dead*, and appointed to be the lord and judge of the world. At the same time the apostle

retorts

* Apuleius de Deo Socratis, p. 690.

† Plut. de Defect. Orac. p. 431. tom. 9. Edit. Paris. 1624.

‡ Plut. Dion in initio. p. 958. tom. i. Edit. Paris. 1624.

retorts the charge upon the Athenians, (ver. 22.) *Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious, too much addicted to the worship of demons; and they worshipped demons or dead men deified in abundance: but he declared unto them (ver. 24.) God who made the world and all things therein.* St. Paul in his first Epistle thus exhorts the Corinthians (1 Cor. x. 14, 20, 21.) *Flee from idolatry. The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils, i. e. demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils, i. e. of demons; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils, i. e. of demons.* The apostle is here showing the great inconsistency of the Christian worship with the idolatrous worship performed by the Heathens. The Heathens worshipped Jupiter, Apollo, Venus, and numberless other beings, who were reputed demons, but who were properly deceased men and women deified. Corinth in particular * was much devoted to the worship of Venus; there she had a most magnificent temple and service; and the city was called the city of Venus. The apostle therefore declares that all such worship is utterly inconsistent with the true worship of Christ. For that would be acknowledging him for their only lord, and at the same time acknowledging other lords. And (ver. 22.) *do we provoke the Lord to jealousy; are we stronger than he?* These passages, together with the text that we are considering, are, I think, all the places in St. Paul's discourses or epistles, where the word *demon* occurs: and as he was of all the apostles the most learned in the philosophy and theology of the Gentiles, and as he was speaking and writing to Gentiles, that might be the reason of his adopting the same notion of demons. He had plainly alluded to this notion a little before in the same Epistle to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6.) and the passage cannot

* Strabo. lib. 8. & Euripides apud Strabonem, p. 378, 379. Edit. Paris. 1620. p. 581, 582. Edit. Amstel. 1707.

cannot be so well understood without it. *There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth; whether Dii caelestes, celestial Gods, as they are usually denominated, or earthly demons, as they are named by Hesiod, mediators and agents between heaven and earth: as there be gods many and lords many; as the Gentiles acknowledge a plurality of such superior and inferior deities; But to us Christians there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, we to him are to direct all our services; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, we by or through him alone have access unto the Father. They have a multitude of gods and lords, but we have only one of each sort. It is the same doctrine that he inculcates likewise in his first Epistle to Timothy, (ii. 5.) For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. As St. Paul here foretels that Christians in the latter times should attend to doctrines concerning demons, so St. John also foretels (Rev. ix. 20.) that notwithstanding the plagues of the Arabian locusts and of the Euphratean horsemen, yet they should not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, or demons; where the word is plainly used in the same sense as by St. Paul: for Christians never actually worshipped devils, but they worshipped demons, deceased men and women and angels, and idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk; and they still continue to worship them, notwithstanding the grievous calamities inflicted on the Christian church by the Saracens first, and by the Turks afterwards, as we shall see in the proper place.*

There is a passage in Epiphanius, which will very much illustrate and confirm our explanation of St. Paul. That Father, who was very zealous against the worship of saints and images, which was then springing up in the church, loudly complains of some Arabian Christians, who made a goddess of the blessed virgin

virgin, and offered a cake to her as to the queen of heaven. He condemns their heresy as impious and abominable, and * declares that "upon these also is fulfilled that of the apostle, *Some shall apostatize from the sound doctrine, giving heed to fables and doctrines of demons.*

It appears then that *the doctrines of demons*, which prevailed so long in the Heathen world, should be revived and established in the Christian church : and is not the worship of saints and angels now in all respects the same that the worship of demons was in former times ? The name only is different, the thing is identically the same. The Heathens, as we see, looked upon their demons as mediators and intercessors between God and men : and are not the saints and angels regarded in the same light by many professed Christians ? Some tendency to the worshipping of angels was observed even in the apostle's time, inasmuch that he thought proper to give this caution to the Colossians, (ii. 18.) *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels* : and this admonition, we may suppose, checked and suppressed this worship for some generations. The worshipping of the dead was not introduced so early into the church ; it was advanced by slower degrees ; and what was at first nothing more than a pious and decent respect to the memory of saints and martyrs, degenerated at last into an impious and idolatrous adoration. At first † annual festivals were instituted to their honour ; the next step was praying in the coemeteries at their sepulchres ; then their bodies were translated into churches ; then a power of working miracles was attributed to their dead bodies, bones, and other relics ; ‡ then their wonder-working relics

* Epiphan. advers. Hær. 78. p. 1055. tom. 1. Edit. Petav.

† See these particulars historically deduced in Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on Daniel, chap. xiv, p. 203—231.

‡ See Rapin and other Historians concerning the many Miracles, supposed to have been wrought at the tomb of Thomas Becket, in Canterbury.

were conveyed from place to place, and distributed among the other churches; then they were invoked and adored for performing such miracles, for assisting men in their devotions, and interceding for them with God; and not only the churches, but even the fields and highways were filled with altars for invoking them.

As early as in the time of Constantine, the first christian emperor, we find Eusebius, one of the best and most learned of the fathers, quoting and approving Hesiod's and Plato's notions before-mentioned concerning demons, and then * adding "These things are befitting upon the decease of the favorites of God, whom you may properly call the champions of the true religion: Whence it is our custom to assemble at their sepulchres, and to make our prayers at them, and to honour their blessed souls." Here Eusebius compares the saints and martyrs with the demons of the Gentiles, and esteems them worthy of the same honour. The famous Antony, who was one of the great founders of monkery, gave it in charge † to the monks with his dying breath, "To take care and adhere to Christ in the first place, and then to the saints, that after death they may receive you as friends and acquaintance into the everlasting tabernacles." His advice was but too well followed; and the emperor Julian ‡ reproacheth the Christians for adding many new dead men to that ancient dead man, Jesus. All the fathers almost of the fourth and fifth centuries contributed too much to the support and propagation of this superstition; and Theodoret in particular, having cited the same passages of Hesiod and Plato, § reasons thus, "If then the poet hath called good men, after their decease, the deliverers and

* Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xiii. cap. 11. p. 663. Edit. Vigeri.

† Vita Antonii. Cap. 91. p. 863. Athanasii Oper. tom. i. par. 2. Edit. Benedicte.

‡ Julian. apud Cyril. lib. x. p. 335. Edit. Spanhemii.

§ Theod. Serm. 8. De Martyribus. p. 602. tom. 5 Edit. Paris. 1642.

and guardians of mortal men ; and the best of philosophers hath confirmed the poet's saying, and asserted that we ought to serve and adore their sepulchres ; why I beseech you Sirs (speaking to the Greeks) do you blame the things which are done by us ? for such as were illustrious for piety, and for the sake thereof received martyrdom, we also name deliverers and physicians, not calling them demons, (let us not be so desperately mad) but the friends and sincere servants of God." Here Theodoret plainly allows the thing, and only disapproves the name. Again he * saith in the same exalted strain concerning the martyrs, " They who are well pray for the continuance of health, and they who have been long sick pray for recovery ; the barren also pray for children ; and they who are to make a long journey desire them to be their companions and guides in the way ; not going to them as Gods, but applying to them as to divine men, and beseeching them to become intercessors for them with God." Nay he saith † that the martyrs have blotted out of the minds of men the memory of those who were called Gods. For our lord hath brought his dead into the place of your Gods, whom he hath utterly abolished, and hath given their honour to the martyrs : for instead of the feasts of Jupiter and of Bacchus are now celebrated the festivals of Peter, and Paul, and Thomas, and the other martyrs. Wherefore seeing the advantage of honoring the martyrs, fly, O friends, from the error of the demons ; and using the martyrs as lights and guides, pursue the way which leadeth directly to God." Here are the *doctrines of demons* evidently revived, only the name is altered, and the saints are substituted for the demons, the Divi or deified men of the Christians for the Divi or deified men of the Heathens.

The promoters of this worship were sensible that it was the same, and that the one succeeded to the other ;

* Ibid. p. 605. 606.

† Ibid. p. 606, 607.

and as the worship is the same, so likewise is it performed with the same ceremonies, whether these ceremonies were derived from the same source of superstition common to the whole race of mankind, or were the direct copies of one another. The * burning of incense or perfumes on several altars at one and the same time ; the sprinkling of holy water, or a mixture of salt and common water, at going into and coming out of places of public worship ; the lighting up of a great number of lamps and wax candles, in broad day-light, before the altars and statues of their deities ; the hanging up of votive offerings and rich presents as attestations of so many miraculous cures and deliverances from diseases and dangers ; the canonization or deification of deceased worthies ; the assigning of distinct provinces or prefectures to departed heroes and saints ; the worshipping and adoring of the dead in their sepulchres, shrines and relics ; the consecrating and bowing down to images ; the attributing of miraculous powers and virtues to idols ; the setting up of little oratories, altars and statues, in the streets and highways, and on the tops of mountains ; the carrying of images and relics in pompous processions with numerous lights, and with music and singing ; flagellations at solemn seasons, under the notion of penance ; the making a sanctuary of temples and churches ; a great variety of religious orders and fraternities of priests, the shaving of priests, or the tonsure, as it is called, on the crown of their heads ; the imposing of celibacy and vows of chastity on the religious of both sexes ; all these and many more rites and ceremonies are equally parts of Pagan and of Popish superstition. Nay the very same temples, the very same altars, the very same images, which once were consecrated to Jupiter and the other

* The reader may see this conformity between Popery and Paganism proved at large by Dr. Henry Moore in his second Part of the *Mystery of Iniquity*. B. I. chap. 17. by Dr. Middleton in his *Letter from Rome*, by Mr. Seward in his *Dissertation on Popery and Paganism*, and other learned and ingenious authors.

other demons, are now consecrated to the virgin Mary and the other saints. The very same titles and inscriptions are ascribed to both; the very same prodigies and miracles are related of these as of those. In short the whole almost of Paganism is converted and applied to Popery; the one is manifestly formed upon the same plan and principles as the other; so that there is not only a conformity, but even an uniformity in the worship of ancient and modern, of Heathen and Christian Rome.

III. Such an apostasy as this of reviving *the doctrines of demons* and worshipping the dead, was not likely to succeed and take place immediately; it should prevail and prosper *in the latter times*. The phrase of *the latter times* or *days*, or *the last times* or *days*, signifies any time yet to come; but denotes more particularly the times of Christianity. So we find it used by some of the antient prophets, as for example, Isaiah, Micah, and Joel. Isaiah saith (ii. 2.) *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.* Micah to the same purpose, and almost in the same words, (iv. 1.) *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it.* And Joel, as he is quoted by St. Peter, (Acts ii. 16, 17.) *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.* The times of Christianity may properly be called *the latter times* or *days*, or *the last times* or *days*, because it is the last of all God's revelations to mankind. Daniel also having measured all future time by the succession of four principal kingdoms, and having affirmed that the kingdom of Christ should be set up during the last of the four kingdoms, the phrase of *the latter times* or *days*, or

of *the last times* or *days*, may still more properly signify the times of the Christian dispensation. Thus it is applied by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb. i. 1, 2.) *God, who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* Thus also St. Peter, (1 Pet. i. 20.) *Christ verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.*

But there is a farther notation of time in the prophet Daniel; there are the last times taken singly and comparatively, or the latter times (as I may say after Mr. Mede) of the last times, which are the times of the little horn or of Antichrist, (Dan. vii.) who should arise during the latter part of the last of the four kingdoms, and should be destroyed together with it, after having continued *a time, and times, and half a time.* What these times signify, and how they are to be computed, hath been shown in a former dissertation: and it is in reference to these times especially, that many things under the gospel-dispensation are predicted to fall out *in the latter times* or *days*, or in *the last times* or *days*. So St. Peter speaketh (2 Pet. iii. 3.) *There shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts.* So too St. Jude, (ver. 17, 18.) *Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you, there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.* So likewise St. Paul, (2 Tim. iii. 1.) *This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come.* These also are the *latter times* spoken of in the text. In these times the worship of the dead should principally prevail; and that it hath so prevailed, all mankind can testify. The practice might begin before, but the popes have authorized and established it by law. The popish worship is more the worship of demons than of God or Christ.

IV. Another remarkable peculiarity of this prophecy is the solemn and emphatic manner, in which

it is delivered, *The Spirit speaketh expressly*. Every one will readily apprehend, that by *the Spirit* is meant the holy Spirit of God, which inspired the prophets and apostles. So *the Spirit* (Acts viii. 29.) said unto Philip, *Go near, and join thyself to this chariot*. So *the Spirit* (Acts x. 19.) said unto Peter, *Behold three men seek thee*. So *the Spirit* (Rev. xiv. 13.) saith *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours*. But these things the Spirit only said; it is not affirmed, that he said them expressly. The Spirit's *speaking expressly*, as Erasmus and others expound it, is his speaking precisely and certainly, not obscurely and involvedly, as he is wont to speak in the prophets: and Whitby argues farther, that in those times of prophecy, when the prophets had the government of the churches, and spake still in the public assemblies, it might reasonably be said, *The Spirit speaketh expressly*, what they taught expressly in the church. But I would prefer Mr. Mede's interpretation, that *the Spirit speaketh expressly* what he speaketh in express words in some place or other of divine writ: and the Spirit hath spoken the same things in express words before in the prophecy of Daniel. Daniel hath foretold in express words the worship of new demons or demi-gods: (Dan. xi. 38.) *And with God, or instead of God Mabuzzim in his estate shall be honour; even with God, or instead of God, those whom his fathers knew not shall be honour with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and desirable things*. The *Mabuzzim* of Daniel are the same as the *Demons* of St. Paul, Gods-protectors or Saints-protectors, defenders and guardians of mankind. Daniel also hath foretold in express words that this worship should be accompanied with a prohibition of marriage: (ver. 37.) *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women; that is he shall neglect and discourage the desire of wives*, and all conjugal affection. Daniel likewise hath intimated that this worship should take place *in the latter times*; for he hath described it in the latter

part of his prophecy, and these times he hath expressly named *a time and times and half a time*. It is easy to perceive the connexion and resemblance between the two prophecies. This therefore is a prophecy not dictated merely by suggestion and inspiration, but taken out of the written word. It is a prophecy not only of St. Paul, but of Daniel too, or rather of Daniel confirmed and approved by St. Paul.

V. Having shown wherein the great apostasy of the latter times consists, namely in reviving the doctrines concerning demons and worshipping the dead, the apostle proceeds to describe by what means and by what persons it should be propagated and established in the world: *Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron*, or rather *Through the hypocrisy of liars, having their conscience seared with a hot iron*. For the preposition *en* signifies as well *by* or *through*: as in St. Mark's Gospel, (ix. 29.) *This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting*: and again in the Acts of the Apostles, (xvii. 31.) *God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained*: and again in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, (xii. 21.) *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil by or with good*: and again in St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, (i. 9.) *That he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers*: and so likewise *by or through hypocrisy*. *Liers* too or *speaking lies* cannot possibly be joined with *some* and *giving heed*, because they are in the nominative case, and this is in the genitive. Neither can it well be joined in construction with *demons* or *devils*; for how can *demons* or *devils* be said to *speak lies in hypocrisy*, and to *have their conscience seared with a hot iron*? Besides if *demons* be taken for *devils*, and not in the sense that we have explained it, then it is not expressed at all, wherein the great apostasy of the latter times consists. The *forbidding to marry* and *commanding to abstain from meats* are circumstances only and appendages of the great apostasy, and not the great

great apostasy itself, which is always represented in scripture as *spiritual fornication* or *idolatry* of one kind or other, and it is not likely that the apostle should specify the circumstantial errors, and omit the main and capital crime. In this place it is not the great apostasy that he is describing, but the characters and qualities of the authors and promoters of it. Castalio therefore very properly * translates *thro' the dissimulation of men speaking lies*: I have added *men*, says he, lest *speaking lies* and what follows should be referred to *demons* or *devils*. It is plain then that the great apostasy of the latter times was to prevail *through the hypocrisy of liars having their conscience seared with a hot iron*: and hath not the great idolatry of Christians, and the worship of the dead particularly, been diffused and advanced in the world by such instruments and agents? It is impossible to relate or enumerate all the various falsehoods and lies, which have been invented and propagated for this purpose; the fabulous books forged under the names of apostles, saints and martyrs; the fabulous legends of their lives, actions, sufferings, and deaths, the fabulous miracles ascribed to their sepulchres, bones, and other relics, the fabulous dreams and revelations, visions and apparitions of the dead to the living, and even the fabulous saints who never existed but in the imagination of their worshippers: And all these stories the monks, the priests, the bishops of the church, have imposed and obtruded upon mankind, it is difficult to say, whether with greater artifice or cruelty, with greater confidence or hypocrisy and pretended sanctity, a more hardened face or a more hardened conscience. The history of the church, saith Pascal, *is the history of truth*; but as written by bigotted papists, it is rather *the history of lies*. So well doth this prophecy coincide and agree with the preceding one, that *the coming of the man of sin* should be *after the working*

* *Per simulationem hominum falsiloquorum*] *Hominum* addidi, ne *falsiloquorum* et sequentia referrentur ad *dæmonia*. Castal. in locum.

ing of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.

VI. A farther character of these men is given in the following words, *Forbidding to marry*. The same hypocritical liars, who should promote the worship of demons, should also prohibit lawful marriage. Saturninus, or Saturnilus, who flourished in the second century, was, as Theodoret * affirms, the first Christian, who declared matrimony to be the doctrine of the devil, and exhorted men to abstain from animal food. But according † to Irenæus and Eusebius, Tatian, who had been a disciple of Justin Martyr, was the first author of this heresy; at least he concurred in opinion with Saturninus and Marcion; and their followers were called *the continents* from their continence in regard to marriage and meats. The Gnostics likewise as Irenæus and Clemens Alexandrinus ‡ inform us, asserted that to marry and beget children proceeded from the devil; and under pretence of continence were impious both against the creature and the creator, teaching that men ought not to bring into the world other unhappy persons, nor supply food for death. Other heretics in the third century advanced the same doctrines, but they were generally reputed heretics, and their doctrines were condemned by the church. The council of Eliberis in Spain, which was held in the year of Christ 305, was I think the first, that by public authority § forbade the clergy to marry, and commanded even those who were married to abstain altogether from their wives. The council of Neocæsarea, in the year 314, only || forbade unmarried presbyters to marry on the penalty of degradation. At the first general council of Nice, in the year 325, a motion was

* made

* Theod. Hæret. Fab. lib. 1. cap. 3. p. 194. tom. 4. Edit. Paris. 1642.

† Iren. apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 4. cap. 29.

‡ Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 3. cap. 6 p. 531. Edit. Potter.

§ Concil. Elib. c. 33. S. Basnagii Annales, Vol. 2. p. 522, & 600.

|| Conc. Neoc. Can. 1. S. Bas. nag. ibid. p. 522, & 657.

* made to restrain the clergy from all conjugal society with their wives: but it was strongly opposed by Paphnutius, a famous Egyptian bishop, who yet himself was never married; and to him the whole council agreed, and left every man to his liberty as before. But the monks had not yet prevailed; the monks soon after overspread the eastern church, and the western too: and as the monks were the first, who brought single life into repute; so they were the first also, who revived and promoted the worship of demons. It is a thing universally known, that one of the primary and most essential laws and constitutions of all monks, whether solitary or associated, whether living in deserts or in convents, is the profession of single life, to abstain from marriage themselves, and to discourage it all they can in others. It is equally certain, that the monks had the principal share in promoting and propagating the worship of the dead; and either out of credulity, or for worse reasons recommended it to the people with all the pomp and power of their eloquence in their homilies and orations. Read only some of the most celebrated fathers; read the † orations of Basil on the martyr Mamas, and on the forty martyrs; read the operations of Ephraim Syrus on the death of Basil, and on the forty martyrs, and on the praises of the holy martyrs; read the orations of Gregory Nazianzen on Athanasius, and on Basil, and on Cyprian; read the orations of Gregory Nyssen on Ephraim Syrus, and on the martyr Theodorus, and Meletius bishop of Antioch; read the sixty-sixth, and other homilies of Chrysostom; read his oration on the martyrs of Egypt, and other orations: and you will be greatly astonished to find how full they are of this sort of superstition, what powers and miracles are ascribed to the saints, what prayers and praises are offered up to them. All these were monks, and most of them bishops

* Socratis Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 11. Sozomen. lib. 1. cap. 23. S. Basnag. ibid. p. 707. Bingham's Antiquities B. 4. Ch. 5. Sect. 7. See also Rapin's State of the Church.

† The reader may see some extracts out of all these in Sir Isaac Newton's observations on Daniel. chap. 14.

shops too, in the fourth century ; and the superstitious worship which these monks begun, the succeeding monks completed, till at length the very relics and images of the dead were worshipped as the dead themselves. The monks then were the principal promoters of the worship of the dead in former times : and who are the great patrons and advocates of the same worship now ? Are not, their legitimate successors and descendants, the monks and priests and bishops of the church of Rome ? and do not they also profess and recommend single life, as well as the worship of saints and angels ? As long ago as the year 386, pope * Siricius held a council of eighty bishops at Rome, and forbade the clergy to cohabit with their wives. This decree was confirmed by pope † Innocent at the beginning of the fifth century : and the celibacy of the clergy was fully decreed by ‡ Gregory the seventh in the eleventh century : and this hath been the universal law and practice of the church ever since. Thus hath the worship of demons and the prohibition of marriage constantly gone hand in hand together : and as they who maintain the one, maintain the other ; so it is no less remarkable, that they who disclaim the one, disclaim also the other, and assert the liberty which nature, or (to speak more properly) the author of nature hath indulged to all mankind.

VII. The last note and character of these men is *commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth* : The same lying hypocrites who should promote the worship of demons, should not only prohibit lawful marriage, but likewise impose unnecessary abstinence from meats : and these too, as indeed it is fit they should, usually go together, as constituent parts of the same hyocrisy. As we learn from § Irenæus, the ancient heretics called Continents, who taught

* Siric. Decr. C. 7. S. Basnage ibid. p. 522.

† Innocent Decr. C. 12. S. Basnage. ibid. et Vol. 3. p. 106.

‡ S. Basnage, Vol. 2. p. 523.

§ Iren. apud Euseb, Eccles. Hist. lib. 4. cap. 29.

taught that matrimony was not to be contracted, repro-
bating the primitive work of God, and tacitly accusing
him who made man and woman for the procreation of
human kind, introduced abstinence also from animal
food showing themselves ungrateful to God who creat-
ed all things. It is as much the law and constitution of
all monks to abstain from meats as from marriage. Some
never eat any flesh, others only of certain kinds and
on certain days. Frequent fasts are the rule, the boast
of their order; and their carnal humility is their spiri-
tual pride. So lived the monks of the ancient church;
so live, with less strictness perhaps but with greater os-
tentation, the monks and friers of the church of Rome:
and these have been the principal propagators and de-
fenders of the worship of the dead, both in former
and in latter times. The worship of the dead is indeed
so monstrously absurd as well as impious, that there
was hardly any possibility of its ever succeeding and
prevailing in the world, but by hypocrisy and lies:
but that these particular sorts of hypocrisy, celibacy
under pretence of chastity, and abstinence under pre-
tence of devotion, should be employed for this pur-
pose, the Spirit of God alone could foresee and foretel.
There is no necessary connexion between the worship
of the dead, and forbidding to marry and commanding
to abstain from meats: and yet it is certain, that the
great advocates of this worship have, by their pre-
tended purity and mortification, procured the greater
reverence to their persons, and the readier reception to
their doctrines. But this idle, popish, monkish ab-
stinence is as unworthy of a Christian, as it is unnatu-
ral to a man. It is perverting the purpose of nature, and
commanding to abstain from meats, which God had
created to be received with thanksgiving by the be-
lievers and them who know the truth. The apostle
therefore approves and sanctifies the religious custom
of blessing God at our meals, as our Saviour, when he
was to distribute the loaves and the fishes, (Mat. xiv.
19. xv. 36.) *looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake:*
And what then can be said of those, who have their
tables

tables spread with the most plentiful gifts of God, and yet constantly sit down and rise up again without suffering so much as one thought of the giver to intrude upon them? It is but a thought, it is but a glimpse of devotion; and can they, who refuse even that, be reputed either to *believe*, or to *know the truth*? Man is free to partake of all the good creatures of God, but thanksgiving is the necessary condition. *For*, as the apostle subjoins in the next verses, (ver. 4, and 5.) *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.* The apostle proceeds to say, that it is the duty of the ministers of the gospel to press and inculcate these things: (ver. 6.) *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* All that is preached up of such abstinence and mortification, as well as all the legends of the saints, are no better than *profane and old wives fables*: Godliness is the only thing that will truly avail us here and hereafter. (ver. 7. and 8.) *But refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness: For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is come.*

An ANALYSIS of the
REVELATION.
IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

IT is very useful, as well as very curious and entertaining, to trace the rise and progress of religions and governments; and in taking a survey of all the different religions and governments of the world, there is none perhaps that will strike us more with wonder and astonishment than that of Rome, how such a mystery of iniquity could succeed at first and prosper so long, and under the name of Christ introduce Antichrist. Other heresies and schisms have obtained place and credit among men for a time, and then have been happily exposed and suppressed. But Popery hath now prevailed I know not how many centuries, and her renowned hierarchs have not, like the fathers of other sects, stole into secret meetings and conventicles, but have infected the very heart of the Christian church, and usurped the chief seat of the western world; have not only engaged in their cause private persons, and *led captive silly women*, but have trampled on the necks of princes and emperors themselves, and the lords and tyrants of mankind have yet been the blind slaves and vassals of the holy see. Rome Christian hath carried her conquests almost as far as Rome Pagan. The Romanists themselves make universality and perpetuity the special marks and characters of their church; and no people more industrious than they in *compassing sea and land to make proselytes*.

All

All sincere protestants cannot but be greatly grieved at the success and prevalence of this religion, and the papists as much boast and glory in it, and for this reason proudly denominate theirs *the catholic* religion. But it will abate all confidence on the one hand, and banish all scruples on the other; if we consider that this is nothing more than what was signified beforehand by the Spirit of prophecy. It is directly foretold, that there should be such a power, as that of the Pope of Rome, exercised in the Christian church, and that it should prevail for a long season, but at last should have a fall. Several clear and express prophecies to this purpose have been produced out of Daniel and St. Paul in the course of these dissertations: but others clearer still, and more copious and particular, may be found in the Apocalyps or Revelation of St. John, who was the greatest as he was the last prophet of the Christian dispensation, and hath comprehended in this book, and pointed out the most memorable events and revolutions in the church, from the apostles days to the consummation of the mystery of God.

But this book of the Apocalyps or Revelation it is usually objected, that it is so wrapt and involved in figures and allegories, is so wild and visionary, is so dark and obscure, that any thing or nothing, at least nothing clear and certain, can be proved or collected from it. It is undeniable that even the most learned men have miscarried in nothing more than in their comments and explanations of this book. To explain this book perfectly is not the work of one man or of one age; and probably it will never all be clearly understood, till it is all fulfilled.

But this book is not therefore to be despised or neglected. They who censure and dissuade the study of it, do it for the most part because they have not studied it themselves, and imagine the difficulties to be greater than they are in reality. It is still *the sure word of prophecy*; and men of learning and leisure cannot better employ their time and abilities than in studying and explaining

explaining this book, provided they do it, as Lord Bacon adviseth, "with great wisdom, sobriety, and reverence." Lord Bacon adviseth it with great regard to all the prophecies, but such caution and reverence are more especially due to this of St. John. "The folly of interpreters has been, as Sir Isaac Newton * observes, to foretel times and things by this prophecy, as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event, and his own providence, not the interpreters, be then manifested thereby to the world." If therefore we would confine ourselves to the rules of just criticism, and not indulge lawless and extravagant fancies; if we would be content with sober and genuine interpretation, and not pretend to be prophets, nor presume to be wise above what is written; we should more consider those passages which have already been accomplished, than frame conjectures about those which remain yet to be fulfilled. Where the facts may be compared with the predictions, there we have some clue to guide us thro' the labyrinth; and though it may be difficult to trace out every minute resemblance, yet there are some strong lines and features, which I think cannot fail of striking every one, who will but impartially and duly examine them.

We should be wanting to the subject, and leave our work unfinished, if we should omit so material a part of prophecy. And yet such a disquisition is not to be entered upon hastily, but after a diligent perusal of the best authors, both foreign and domestic; and it will be happy, if out of them all there can be formed one entire system, complete and consistent in all its

* Sir Isaac Newton's Observations upon the Apocalyps, chap. 1. p. 251.

parts. As Sir Isaac Newton * says, " Amongst the interpreters of the last age there is scarce one of note who hath not made some discovery worth knowing." But our greatest obligations are owing to three particularly, Mr. Mede, Vitringa, and Daubuz. We shall find reason generally to concur with one or more of them ; but as they often differ from one another, so we shall differ sometimes from all the three, and follow other guides, or perhaps no guides at all. What satisfaction we may give to others, is very uncertain; we shall at least have the satisfaction ourselves of tracing the ways of providence.

Let us then proceed, encouraged by that divine benediction, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.*

C H A P. I.

1. **T**HE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John :

2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep these things which are written therein : for the time is at hand.

The book opens (ver. 1, 2, 3.) with the title or inscription of the book itself; the scope and design of it, to foretel things which should shortly begin to be fulfilled, and succeed in their due season and order, till all were accomplished ; and the blessing pronounced on him who shall read and explain it, and on them who shall hear and attend to it. The distinction is remarkable of *him that readeth*, and of *them that hear* ; for books being then in manuscript were in much fewer hands,

* Sir Isaac Newton, *ibid.* p. 253.

hands, and it was a much readier way to publish a prophecy or any thing by public reading than by transcribing copies. It was too the custom of that age to read all the apostolical writings in the congregations of the faithful ; but now only some few parts of this book are appointed to be read on certain festivals.

4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia : Grace *be* unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come ; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne ;

5. And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth : Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7. Behold he cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him : and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him : even so, Amen.

8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The apostle dedicates his book (ver. 4, 5, 6.) to the seven churches of the Lydian or proconsular Asia, wishing them grace and peace from the eternal God as the author and giver ; and from the seven spirits, the representatives and ministers of the Holy Ghost, as the instruments ; and from Jesus Christ as the mediator, who is mentioned last, because the subsequent discourse more immediately relates to him. To the dedication he subjoins a short and solemn preface (ver. 7, 8.) to show the great authority of the divine person, who had commissioned him to write the revelation.

9. I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience

of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10. I was in the spirit on the Lord's day and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11. Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14. His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

15. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead: and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18. *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

19. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

20. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches.

He then (ver. 9—20.) mentions the place, where the Revelation was given, and describes the manner and circumstances of the first vision. The place, where the Revelation was given, was Patmos a desolate island in the Archipelago, whither he was banished for the confession of the gospel. This happened in the reign of Nero more probably than in that of Domitian. It is indeed the more general opinion, that the Apocalyps was written in Domitian's reign; and this opinion is founded upon the * testimony of Irenæus, who was the disciple of Polycarp, who had been the disciple of St. John. This authority is great, and is made still greater, as it is confirmed by † Eusebius in his Chronicle and in his Ecclesiastical History. But Eusebius a little afterwards in the ‡ same history recites a memorable story out of Clemens Alexandrinus; that St. John, after he returned from Patmos, committed a hopeful young man to the care of a certain bishop; that the bishop received him into his house, educated, instructed, and at length baptized him; that the bishop afterwards remitting of his care and strictness, the young man was corrupted by idle and dissolute companions, revelled with them, robbed with them, and forming them into a gang of highway men was made their captain, and became the terror of all the country; that after some time St. John coming upon other occasions to revisit the same bishop, inquired after the young man, and was informed that he was not to be found in the church, but in such a mountain with his fellow robbers; that St. John called for a horse, and rode immediately to the place; that when the young man saw him, he fled away from him; that St. John forgetting his age pursued eagerly after him, recalled him, and restored him to the church. Now all these transactions must necessarily take up

* Iren. advers. Hæres. lib. 5. cap. 30. p. 449. Edit. Grabe

† Eusebii Chron. lib. 1. Edit. Scalig. p. 80. Gr. p. 44. Lat. Vide etiam p. 164. Libri posterioris, et Chron. Can. p. 208. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 18.

‡ Euseb. Hist. ibid. cap. 23.

some years; and may seem credible if St. John was banished by Nero, but are altogether impossible if he was banished by Domitian; for he survived Domitian but a very few years, and he was then near 100 years old, and so very weak and infirm, that he was with great difficulty carried to church, and could hardly speak a few words to the people, and much less ride briskly after a young robber. Epiphanius * asserts, that he was banished into Patmos, and wrote the Apocalyps there, in the reign of Claudius: but possibly he might mistake Claudius for his successor Nero. The churches of Syria have thus inscribed their version, "The Revelation made to John the Evangelist by God in the island Patmos, into which he was banished by Nero the Cæsar." The antient commentators † Andreas and Arethas affirm, that it was understood to be written before the destruction of Jerusalem. So many spurious Apocalypses, written by Cerinthus and others in early times, demonstrate evidently that the Apocalyps of St. John, in imitation whereof they were written, was still earlier, and was held in high estimation among Christians. But what is to me an unanswerable argument, the stile itself, so full of Hebraisms, and as I may say so full of barbarisms and even solecisms, as some ‡ even of the antients have observed, manifestly evinces, that the author was but lately come out of Judea, was little accustomed to write in Greek, and had not yet attained to that greater purity of stile, which appears in his Gospel and Epistles. Sir Isaac Newton hath farther § shown, that in the Epistle of St. Peter, and in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, there are several allusions to this book of the Apocalyps; and St. Peter and St. Paul, all the antients agree, suffered martyrdom in the

* Epiphan. advers. Hæres. lib. 1. tom. 2. Sect. 12. p. 434. Sect. 33. p. 456. Edit. Petav.

† Andreas in Apoc. vi. 16. Arethas in Apoc. xviii. 19.

‡ Dionysius Alex. apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 7. cap. 25.

§ Sir Isaac Newton's Observations upon the Apoc. chap. 1. p. 239—246.

the end of Nero's reign. It may indeed be retorted, that St. John might borrow from St. Peter and St. Paul, as well as St. Peter and St. Paul from St. John: but if you will consider and compare the passages together, you will find sufficient reason to be convinced, that St. Peter's and St. Paul's are the copies, and St. John's the original. Moreover it is to be observed, that this Revelation was given *on the Lord's day*, when the apostle's heart and affections, as we may reasonably suppose, were sublimed by the meditations and devotions of the day, and rendered more recipient of divine inspiration. The heavenly visions were vouchsafed to St. John, as they were before to Daniel, (Dan ix. x.) after supplication and prayer: and there being * two kinds of prophetic revelation in a vision and a dream, the Jews accounted a vision superior to a dream, as representing things more perfectly and to the life.

In the first vision Jesus Christ, or his angel, speaking in his name, and acting in his person, appears amid *the seven golden candlesticks*, meaning *the seven churches*. His clothing is somewhat like the high-priest's, and he is described much in the same manner as the divine appearances in Daniel's visions. (Dan. vii. 9. x. 5, &c.) St. John at the sight of so glorious a person fell down senseless before him, as Daniel did upon the same occasion: and like Daniel too, he is graciously raised and encouraged, and commanded to write *the things which he had seen*, contained in this chapter, *and the things which are*, the present state of the seven churches represented in the two next chapters, *and the things which shall be hereafter*, the future events which begin to be exhibited in the fourth chapter, as it is there said (ver. 1.) *Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must be hereafter.*

* Maimon. in More Nevoch. Part 2. cap. 36. Smith's Discourse of Prophecy, chap. 2. p. 174, 175.

C H A P. II.

1. **U**NTO the angel of the church of Ephesus, write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks :

2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil : and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not ; and hast found them liars :

3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4. Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write, These things, saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive ;

9. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

10. Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer : behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.

12. And

12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamus, write, These things saith he, which hath the sharp sword with two edges ;

13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat *is* : and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16. Repent ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth *it*.

18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira, write, These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brags ;

19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works : and the last to be more than the first.

20. Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth her self a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not.

22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23. And

23. And I will kill her children with death ; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden.

25. But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come.

26. And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations :

27. (And he shall rule them with a rod of iron : as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers) even as I received of my Father.

28. And I will give him the morning star.

29. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

C H A P. III.

1. **A**ND unto the angel of the church in Sardis, write, These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars ; I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead.

2. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die : for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white : for they are worthy.

5. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of

of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels,

6. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

7. And to the angel of the church of Philadelphia, write, These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth:

8. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan (which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie) behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is new Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him my new name*.

13. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

14. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

15. I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth:

17. Be-

17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing : and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

19. As many as I love, I rebuke, and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent.

20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The second and third chapters contain the seven epistles to the seven churches of Asia, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. These seven are addressed particularly, because they were under St. John's immediate inspection : he * constituted bishops over them ; he was as it were their metropolitan, and resided much at Ephesus, which is therefore named the first of the seven. The main subjects too of this book are comprised in sevens, seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials ; as seven was also a mystical number throughout the Old Testament. Many contend, and among them such learned men as More and Vitringa, that the seven epistles are prophetic of so many successive periods and states of the church from the beginning to the conclusion of all. But it doth not appear, that there are or were to be seven periods

* Tertull. advers. Marcion. Lib. 4. Sect. 5. p. 415. Edit. Rigaltii. Paris. 1675. Millii Prolegom. in Nov. Test. p. 20.

periods of the church, neither more nor less: and no two men can agree in assigning the same periods. There are likewise in these epistles several innate characters, which are peculiar to the church of that age, and cannot be so well applied to the church of any other age. Besides other arguments, there is also this plain reason; the last state of the church is described in this very book as the most glorious of all, but in the last state in these epistles, that of Laodicea, the church is represented as *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

But though these epistles have rather a literal than a mystical meaning, yet they contain excellent moral precepts and exhortations, commendations and reproofs, promises and threatenings, which may be of use and instruction to the church in all ages. The form and order of the parts you will find the same almost in all the epistles; first a command to write; then some character and attributes of the speaker, taken from the vision in the first chapter, and appropriated to the matter of each epistle; then commendations or reproofs with suitable promises or threatenings; and then in all the same conclusion, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.* What therefore the Spirit saith unto one church, he saith in some measure to all the churches. The church of Ephesus in particular is admonished to repent, and forewarned if she would not repent, her *candlestick should be removed out of his place.* But this admonition belonged equally to all the churches: and hath not their candlestick been accordingly removed out of its place, and the light of the gospel taken from them? Were they not ruined and overthrown by their heresies and divisions from within, and by the arms of the Saracens from without? and doth not Mohammedism still prevail and prosper in these countries, which were once the glory of Christendom, their churches turned into mosques, their worship into superstition? Ephesus in particular, which was once so magnificent and glorious a city, is become a mean forbid village, with

with scarcely a single family of Christians dwelling in it, as approved authors testify. To the church of Smyrna it is predicted, that she should *have tribulation ten days, or ten years* according to the usual stile of prophecy: and the greatest persecution that the primitive church ever endured was the persecution of Diocletian, which lasted * ten years, and grievously afflicted all the Asian, and indeed all the eastern churches. This character can agree to none of the other general persecutions, for none of the others lasted so long as ten years. As the commendatory and reproving part of these epistles exhibits the present state of the churches, so the promissory and threatening part foretels something of their future condition; and in this sense, and in none other, can these epistles be said to be prophetic.

The first epistle is addressed to the church of Ephesus, as it was the metropolis of the Lydian Asia, and the place of St. John's principal residence. It was, according to † Strabo, one of the best and most glorious cities, and the greatest emporium of the proper Asia. It is called by Pliny ‡ one of the eyes of Asia, Smyrna being the other: but now, as eye-witnesses § have related, it is venerable for nothing but the ruins of palaces, temples, and amphitheatres. It is called by the Turks Ajasaluk, or the temple of the moon, from the magnificent structure formerly dedicated to Diana. The church of St. Paul is wholly destroyed. The little which remains of that of St. Mark is nodding to ruin. The only church remaining is that dedicated to St. John, which is now converted into a Turkish mosque. The whole town is nothing but a habitation of herdsmen and farmers, living in low and humble cottages of dirt, sheltered from the extremities

* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 11. cap. 15, & 16. Lactant de Mort. Persecut. cap. 48.

† Strabo lib. 14. p. 634.

‡ Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 31. p. 280 Edit. Harduin.

§ Smith Sept. Asiae Eccles. Notit. Rycaut's Present State of the Greek Church, chap. 2. Wheler and Spon's Voyage, B. 3. Van Egmont's and Heyman's Travels, Vol. 1. chap. 9.

of weather by mighty masses of ruinous walls; the pride and ostentation of former days, and the emblem in these, of the frailty of the world, and the transient vanity of human glory. All the inhabitants of this once famous city amount not now to above forty or fifty families of Turks, without one Christian family among them: so strikingly hath the denunciation been fulfilled, that their *candlestick should be removed out of his place.*

Smyrna was the nearest city to Ephesus, and for that reason probably was addressed in the second place. It is situated * on lower ground than the antient city, and lieth about forty-five miles northward of Ephesus. It is called Esmir by the Turks, and is celebrated not so much for the splendor and pomp of the buildings (for they are rather mean and ruinous) as for the number, and wealth, and commerce of the inhabitants. The Turks have here fifteen mosques, and the Jews several synagogues. Among these enemies of the christian name the christian religion also flourishes in some degree. Smyrna still retains the dignity of a metropolis, altho' there are only two churches of the Greeks. But besides them, here is a great number of Christians of all nations, sects, and languages. The Latin church hath a monastery of Franciscans. The Armenians have one church. But the English, who are the most considerable number, next to the Greeks and Armenians, have only a chapel in the consul's house; which is a shame, says Wheler, considering the great wealth they heap up here, beyond all the rest: yet they commonly excel them in their pastor; for I esteem a good English priest, an evangelist, if compared with any of the rest. Frequent plagues and earthquakes are the great calamities of the place; but the Christians are here more considerable, and in far better condition, than in any other of the seven churches: as if the promise was still in some measure made good to Smyrna, *Fear none of those things, which*

* Smith, Rycaut, Wheler and Spon. *ibid.* Van Egmont's and Heyman's Travels. chap. 8.

which thou shalt suffer; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Pergamus, formerly the metropolis of the Helle-spontic Mysia, and the seat of the Attalic kings, is * by the Turks with some little variation still called Bergamo, and hath its situation about sixty-four miles to the north of Smyrna. Here are some good buildings, but more ruins. All the city almost is occupied by the Turks, very few families of Christians being left, whose state is very sad and deplorable. Here is only one church remaining, dedicated to St. Theodorus; and that the name of Christ is not wholly lost and forgotten in Pergamus, is owing to the care of the metropolitan of Smyrna, who continually sendeth hither a priest to perform the sacred offices. The cathedral church of St. John is buried in its own ruins; their angel or bishop removed; and its fair pillars adorn the graves, and rotten carcases of its destroyers, the Turks; who are esteemed about two or three thousand souls in number. Its other fine church, called Santa Sophia, is turned into a mosque, and daily profaned with the blasphemies of the false prophet. There are not in the whole town above a dozen or fifteen families of miserable Christians, who till the ground to gain their bread, and live in the most abject and sordid servitude. There is the less reason to wonder at the wretched condition of this church, when we consider that it was the very *throne of Satan*: that they *ran greedily after the error of Balaam, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication*: and that *they held the impure doctrines of the Nicolaitans, which Christ detested*. It was denounced unto them to *repent, or else he would come unto them quickly, and fight against them*, as the event evinces that he hath done.

Next to Pergamus is Thyatira † situated at the distance of about forty-eight miles to the south-east. Certain heretics called *Alogi* (which may not improperly

* Smith, Rycaut, Wheler and Spon. *ibid*.

† Smith and Rycaut. *ibid*.

perly be interpreted *unreasonable men*) have * affirmed, but have only affirmed without any proof, that at the time of St. John's writing there was no Christian church at Thyatira. Epiphanius admits it, and thence infers that St. John must have wrote with a prophetic spirit. The objection is frivolous, but the answer is worse. For there is no just reason for doubting, that at this time there was a Christian church at Thyatira. This very epistle is a sufficient proof of it. It is said expressly, (Acts xix. 10.) that *all they who dwelt in Asia* (meaning Asia Minor) *heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks*: and what ground is there for thinking that the city of Thyatira was alone excepted? It is said particularly, (Acts xvi. 14.) that *Lydia, an eminent trader and seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, was baptized with her household*. At present the city is called by the Turks † Akhisar or the white castle, from the great quantities of white marble there abounding. Only one antient edifice is left standing. The rest, even the churches, are so destroyed, that no vestiges of them are to be found. The principal inhabitants are Turks, who have here eight mosques, when not so much as one Christian church is still remaining. So terribly have the divine judgments been poured upon this church for *committing fornication, and eating things sacrificed unto idols*; *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not*.

Sardis, once the renowned capital of Croesus and the rich Lydian kings, † is now no longer worthy of the name of a city. It lieth about thirty-three miles to the south of Thyatira, and is called by the Turks Sart or Sard, with little or no variation from the old original name. It is a most sad spectacle, nor can one forbear weeping over the ruins of so great a city.

* Epiphan. advers. Hæres. lib. 2. tom. 1. cap. 33. p. 455. Vol. 1. Edit. Petav.

† Smith and Rycaut. *ibid*.

† Smith, Rycaut, Wheler and Spon. *ibid*. Van Egmont's and Heyman's Travels. chap. 10.

For now it is no more than an ignoble village, with low and wretched cottages of clay; nor hath it any other inhabitants, besides shepherds and herdsmen, who feed their flocks and cattle in the neighbouring plains. Yet the great extent and grandeur of the ruins abundantly show, how large and splendid a city it was formerly. The Turks themselves have only one mosque, a beautiful one indeed, perverted to that use from a Christian church. Very few Christians are here to be found; and they with great patience, or rather senseless stupidity, sustain a miserable servitude; and what is far more miserable, are without a church, without a priest among them. Such is the deplorable state of once the most glorious city: but *her works were not found perfect*, that is they were found blameable, *before God*; she was *dead*, even while she *lived*; and she is punished accordingly.

Philadelphia, so called from Attalus Philadelphus its builder, * is distant from Sardis about twenty-seven miles to the south-east. It is called by the Turks Alah Shahr, or the beautiful city, on account of its delightful situation, standing on the declivity of the mountain Tmolus, and having a most pleasant prospect on the plains beneath, well furnished with divers villages, and watered by the river Pactolus. It still retains the form of a city, with something of trade to invite people to it, being the road of the Persian caravans. Here is little of antiquity remaining, besides the ruins of a church dedicated to St. John, which is now made a dunghill to receive the offals of dead beasts. However, God hath been pleased to preserve some in this place to make profession of the Christian faith, there being above two hundred houses of Christians, and four churches; whereof the chief is dedicated to Panagia or the holy Virgin; the other to St. George who is of great fame among the oriental Christians; the third to St. Theodore; and the fourth to St. Taxiarchus, as St. Michael the arch-angel is called by the Greeks.

* Smith, Rycaut, Wheler and Spon. *ibid*.

Greeks. Next to Smyrna this city hath the greatest number of Christians, and Christ hath promised a more particular protection to it; *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and none can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Than which, as Dr. Spon saith, what could be said more formally to foretel the coming of the Turks, the open enemies of Christianity; who seem to be sent on purpose for the punishment of our crimes, and to distinguish the faithful from the false Christians, who pretend to be so, and are not?

Laodicea lay south of Philadelphia, in the way to return to Ephesus: and if you will inspect the maps of Asia Minor, you will find the seven churches to lie in a kind of circular form, so that the natural progress was from Ephesus to Smyrna, from Smyrna to Pergamus, from Pergamus to Thyatira, from Thyatira to Sardis, from Sardis to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia to Laodicea, and from Laodicea round to Ephesus again; which is the method and order that St. John hath observed in addressing them, and was probably the circuit that he took in his visitation. That there was a flourishing church at Laodicea in the primitive times of Christianity, is evident from St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, wherein frequent mention is made of the Laodiceans, as well as from this Epistle of St. John. But the doom of Laodicea * seemeth to have been more severe and terrible than that of almost any other of the seven churches. For it is now utterly destroyed and forsaken of men, and is become an habitation only for wolves, foxes, and jackalls, a den of dragons, snakes, and vipers. And that because the Lord hath executed the judgment, that he hath pronounced, upon her: that all the world might know,

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and

* Smith, Rycaut, Wheeler and Spon. *ibid.*

and tremble at the fierce anger of God against impenitent, negligent, and careless sinners. For such was the accusation of the *lukewarm* Laodiceans, who grew proud and self-conceited, thinking themselves much better than they really were. Wherefore, because they were *neither hot nor cold*, they were loathsome to Christ; and he therefore assured them, that he *would spit them out of his mouth*. The ruins show it to have been a very great city, situate upon six or seven hills, and incompassing a large space of ground. Some notion may be formed of its former greatness and glory from three theatres and a circus which are remaining; one of which is truly admirable, as it was capable of containing above thirty thousand men, into whose area they descended by fifty steps. This city is now called *Eski Hisar*, or the old castle; and tho' it was once the mother-church of sixteen bishoprics, yet it now lieth desolate, not so much as inhabited by shepherds, and so far from shewing any of the ornaments of God's antient worship, it cannot now boast of an anchorite's or hermit's chapel, where God's name is praised or invoked.

Such is the state and condition of these seven once glorious and flourishing churches; and there cannot be a stronger proof of the truth of prophecy, nor a more effectual warning to other Christians. "These objects, as Wheler * justly observes, ought to make us, who yet enjoy the divine mercies, to tremble, and earnestly contend to find out *from whence we are fallen*, and do daily fall from bad to worse; that God is a God of *purser eyes than to behold iniquity*; and seeing *the axe* is thus long since *put to the root of the tree*, should it not make us repent and turn to God, *lest we likewise perish*?—We see here *what destruction the Lord hath brought upon the earth*. But it is the *Lord's doing*: and thence we may reap no small advantage by considering how *just* he is in all his *judgments*, and *faithful* in all his *promises*." We may

truly

* Wheler's Voyage, B. 3. p. 259, &c.

truly say (1 Cor. x. 11, 12.) that *all these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

C H A P. IV.

1. **A**FTER this, I looked, and behold, a door *was* opened in heaven : and the first voice which I heard, *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me ; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

2. And immediately I was in the spirit : and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne.

3. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone : and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4. And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats : and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thundrings, and voices : And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

6. And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal : And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

7. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

8. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and *they were* full of eyes within ; and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

9. And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.

10. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.

After this vision relating to *the things which are*, other visions succeed of *the things which must be hereafter*. (ver. 1.) The scene is laid in heaven; and the scenery is drawn in allusion to (Numb. i. ii.) the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness. God is represented (ver. 2, 3.) sitting on his throne, as in the tabernacle or temple, much in the same manner as the prophet Ezekiel (i. 26, 27, 28.) hath described him. Next to the tabernacle encamped the Priests and Levites; and next to the throne (ver. 4.) *were four and twenty elders sitting*, answering to the princes of the four and twenty courses of the Jewish priests; *clothed in white raiment*, as emblems of their purity and sanctity; *and they had on their heads crowns of gold*, Christ having made them (1 Pet. ii. 9.) *a royal priesthood*, and (Rev. v. 10.) *kings and priests unto God*. *Out of the throne proceeded* (ver. 5.) *lightnings, and thunders, and voices*, the usual concomitants and attendants of the divine presence: *and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne*, answering to the golden candlestick with seven lamps, which was before the most holy place in the tabernacle. Before the throne there was also (ver. 6.) *a sea of glass, like unto crystal*, answering to the great molten sea or laver in the temple of Solomon: *and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne*, that is before and behind the throne, and on each side of the throne, *were four beasts or rather four living creatures*,

tures, representing the heads of the whole congregation in the four quarters of the world, and resembling the Cherubim and Seraphim in Ezekiel's and Isaiah's visions, (Ezek. i. 10. x. 14. If. vi. 2, 3.) or rather resembling the four standards or ensigns of the four divisions in the camp of Israel, according to the * traditionary description of them by Jewish writers. *The first living creature was like a lion*, (ver. 7.) which was the standard of Judah with the two other tribes in the eastern division; *and the second like a calf or ox*, which was the standard of Ephraim with the two other tribes in the western division; *and the third had a face like a man*, which was the standard of Reuben with the two other tribes in the southern division; *and the fourth was like a flying eagle*, which was the standard of Dan with the two other tribes in the northern division: and this traditionary description agrees also with the four faces of the Cherub in Ezekiel's visions. Of these living creatures and of the elders the constant employment (ver. 8—11.) is to celebrate in hymns of praise and thanksgiving, the great and wonderful works of creation and providence.

CH A P. V.

1. **A**ND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

* See Aben Ezra and others quoted by Mr. Mede, p. 437.

5. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

14. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Future events are supposed by St. John, as well as by Daniel and other prophets, in a beautiful figure, to be registered in *a book*, for the greater certainty of them. This book (ver. 1.) is *in the right hand of God*, to denote that as he alone directs the affairs of futurity, so he alone is able to reveal them. This, book, through the abundance of the matter, was *written within and on the backside*; as the roll of the book, which was spread before Ezekiel, (ii. 10) was *written within and without*. It was also *sealed*, to signify that the decrees of God are inscrutable, and sealed *with seven seals*, referring to so many signal periods of prophecy. In short we should conceive of this book, that it was such an one as the antients used, a volume or roll of a book, or more properly a volume consisting of seven volumes, so that the opening of one seal laid open the contents only of one volume. All creatures are challenged (ver. 2.) *to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof*. But (ver. 3.) *no one in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth*, neither angels, nor men, nor departed spirits, were any of them qualified to comprehend and communicate the secret purposes of God. St. John *wept much* (ver. 4.) at the sad disappointment; but who now is concerned or grieved, that he cannot understand these prophecies? However he is comforted (ver. 5.) with an assurance, that still there was one who had power and authority to reveal and accomplish the counsels of God. The Son of God, and he alone, was found worthy to be the great revealer and interpreter of his Father's oracles; (ver. 6, &c.) and he obtained this privilege by the merits of his sufferings and death. Whereupon the whole church, (ver. 8, &c.) and all angels, (ver. 11, &c.) and all creatures (ver. 13, &c.) sing praises to God and to the Lamb for such glorious manifestations of divine providence. All this is by way of preface or introduction, to show the great dignity, importance, and excellence of the prophecies here delivered,

C H A P. VI.

I. **A**ND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come, and see.

2. And I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

As the seals are opened in order, so the events follow in order too. The first seal or period (ver. 1, 2.) is memorable for conquest, and was proclaimed by the first of the four living creatures, who was like a lion, and had his station in the east. *And I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.* This first period commenceth with Vespasian and Titus, who from commanding * in the east were advanced to the empire; and Vespasian for this reason was regarded, † both by Romans and foreigners, as that great prince who was to come out of the east, and obtain dominion over the world. *They went forth to conquer;* for they made an entire conquest of Judea, destroyed Jerusalem, and carried the Jews captive into all nations. As these prophecies were written a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem, they properly begin with some allusion to that memorable event; and a short allusion was sufficient, our Saviour himself having enlarged so much upon all the particulars. The *bow*, the *white horse*, and the *crown* are proper emblems of victory, triumph, and royalty; and the proclamation

* Hujus (Vitellii) tempore Vespasianus in oriente principarum arripuit. Aurel. Victor. Epit. cap. 8.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. 5. p. 217. Edit. Lipsii. Sueton. in Vesp. cap. 4. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6. cap. 5. Sect. 4. p. 1283. Edit. Hudson.

clamation for conquest is fitly made by a creature like a lion. This period continued during the reigns of the Flavian family and the short reign of Nerva, about twenty-eight years.

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4. And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The second seal or period (ver. 3, 4.) is noted for war and slaughter, and was proclaimed by the second living creature, who was like an ox, and had his station in the west. *And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword.* This second period commenceth with Trajan, who came from the west, being a * Spaniard by birth, and was the first foreigner who was elevated to the imperial throne. In his reign and that of his successor Adrian there were horrid wars and slaughters, and especially between the rebellious Jews and the Romans. Dion relates, † that the Jews about Cyrene slew of the Romans and Greeks two hundred and twenty thousand men with the most shocking circumstances of barbarity. In Egypt also and in Cyprus they committed the like barbarities, and there perished two hundred and forty thousand men more. But the Jews were subdued in their turn by Lucius and the other generals sent against them by Trajan. Eusebius writing of the same time saith, ‡ that the Jews inflamed as it were by some violent and seditious demon, in the first conflict gained a victory over the Gentiles,

* Dion. Hist. lib. 68. p. 771. Edit. Leun. clav.

† Dion. ibid. p. 786.

‡ Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 4. chap. 2.

Gentiles, who flying to Alexandria took and killed the Jews in the city. The emperor sent Marcius Turbo against them, with great forces by sea and land; who in many battles slew many myriads of the Jews. The emperor also suspecting that they might make the like commotions in Mesopotamia ordered Lucius Quietus to expel them out of the province, who marching against them slew a very great multitude of them there. Orosius treating of the same time saith, * that the Jews with an incredible commotion, made wild as it were with rage, rose at once in different parts of the earth. For throughout all Libya they waged the fiercest wars against the inhabitants, and the country was almost desolated. Egypt also and Cyrene and Thebais they disturbed with cruel seditions. But in Alexandria they were overcome in battle. In Mesopotamia also war was made upon the rebellious Jews by the command of the emperor. So that many thousands of them were destroyed with vast slaughter. They utterly destroyed Salamis, a city of Cyprus, having first murdered all the inhabitants. These things were transacted in the reign of Trajan: and in the reign of Adrian † was their great rebellion under their false Messiah Barchochab, and their final dispersion, after fifty of their strongest castles and nine hundred and eighty-five of their best towns had been demolished, and after five hundred and eighty thousand men had been slain by the sword, besides an infinite multitude who had perished by famine and sickness and other casualties, with great loss and slaughter too of the Romans, insomuch that the emperor forbore the usual salutations in his letters to the senate. Here was another illustrious triumph of Christ over his enemies; and the Jews and the Romans, both the persecutors of the Christians, were remarkably made the dreadful executioners of divine vengeance upon one another. The *great sword* and the *red horse* are expressive emblems of this slaughtering and bloody period;

* Oros. Hist. lib. 7. cap. 12. p. 487. Edit. Havercamp,

† Euseb. ibid. Cap. 6. Dion, ibid. lib. 69. p. 794.

period; and the proclamation for slaughter is fitly made by a creature like an ox that is destined for slaughter. This period continued during the reigns of Trajan and his successors by blood or adoption about ninety-five years.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come, and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The third seal or period (ver. 5, 6.) is characterized by the strict execution of justice and judgment, and by the procuration of corn and oil and wine; and was proclaimed by the third living creature, who was like a man, and had his station in the south. *And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* Where Grotius and others have * observed, that a *chaenix* of corn, the measure here mentioned, was a man's daily allowance, as a *penny* was his daily wages; so that if his daily labour could earn no more than his daily bread, without other provision for himself or his family, corn must needs bear a very high price. But whatever may be the capacity of the *chaenix*, which is difficult to be determined, as it was different in different times and countries; yet such care and such regulations about the necessaries of life imply some want and scarcity of them. Scarcity obligeth men to exactness in the price and measure of things. In short, the intent of the prophecy is, that corn should be provided for the people, but it should be distributed in
exact

* Grot. in locum. Vide etiam Vitring. p. 259.

exact measure and proportion. This third period commenceth with Septimius Severus, who was an emperor from the south, being * a native of Africa. He was an enactor of just and equal laws, and was very severe and implacable to offences; he would not suffer even petty larcenies to go unpunished: as neither would Alexander Severus in the same period, who † was a most severe judge against thieves; and was so fond of the Christian maxim, *Whatsoever you would not have done to you, do not you to another*, that he commanded it to be engraven on the palace, and on the public buildings. These two emperors were also no less celebrated for the procuring of corn and oil and other provisions, and for supplying the Romans with them after they had experienced a want of them. They repaired the neglects of former times, and corrected the abuses of former princes. Of Septimius Severus it is said, that ‡ the provision of corn, which he found very small, he so far consulted, that at his death he left a certain rate or allowance to the Roman people for seven years: and also of oil as much as for the space of five years might supply not only the uses of the city, but likewise of all Italy which might want oil. Of Alexander Severus it is also said, that § he took such care in providing for the Roman people, that the corn which Heliogabalus had wasted, he replaced it out of his own money; the oil also, which Septimius Severus had given to the people, and which Heliogabalus had lessened, he restored whole as before. The colour of the *black horse* befits the severity of their nature and their name, and the *balances* are the well known emblem of justice, as well

* Ælius Spartianus in Severo. Hist. August. Scriptores VI. p. 64. Edit. Salmasii.

† Aurel. Victor de Cæsar. cap. 20.

‡ Severissimus iudex contra fures — *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*; quam sententiam usque adeo dilexit, ut et in palatio et in publicis operibus præscribi juberet. Lampridius in Alexandro. Hist. August. Script. VI. p. 123 & 132. Edit. Salmasii.

§ Spartian in Severo. ibid. p. 73.

|| Lamprid. in Alex. ibid. p. 121.

well as an intimation of scarcity ; and the proclamation for justice and judgment, and for the procuration of corn and oil and wine, is fitly made by a creature like a man. This period continued during the reigns of the Septimian family about forty-two years.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come, and see.

8. And I looked, and behold, a pale horse ; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him : and power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The fourth seal or period (ver. 7, 8.) is distinguished by a concurrence of evils, war, and famine, and pestilence, and wild beasts ; and was proclaimed by the fourth living creature, who was like an eagle, and had his station in the north. *And I looked, and behold, a pale horse ; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him : and power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.* These are the same four sore judgments, with which Ezekiel (xiv. 21.) threatened Jerusalem, *the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence* ; for in the oriental languages the pestilence is emphatically stiled *death*. These four were to destroy *the fourth part* of mankind ; and the image is very poetical, of *death riding on a pale horse*, and *hell or the grave following with him*, ready to swallow up the dead corpses. This period commenceth with Maximin, who was an emperor from the north, being * born of barbarous parents in a village of Thrace. He was indeed a barbarian in all respects. There was not, as an † historian affirms, a more cruel animal upon the earth ; and he was deservedly

* Herodian. lib. 6. p. 140. Edit. H. Steph. 1581.

† Jul. Capit. ibid. p. 141.

servedly called by the name of Cyclops, Busiris, Phalaris, and the worst of tyrants. The history of his and several succeeding reigns is full of wars and murders, mutinies of soldiers, and invasions of foreign armies, rebellions of subjects, and deaths of princes. There were more than twenty emperors in the space of fifty years, and all or most of them died in war, or were murdered by their own soldiers and subjects. Besides lawful emperors, there were in the reign of Gallienus * thirty tyrants or usurpers, who set up in different parts of the empire, and came all to violent and miserable ends. Here was sufficient employment for the *sword*; and such wars and devastations must necessarily produce a *famine*, and the *famine* is another distinguishing calamity of this period. In the reign of Gallus the Scythians made such incursions, that † not one nation subject to the Romans was left unwasted by them, and every unwalled town, and most of the walled cities were taken by them. In the reign of Probus also ‡ there was a great famine throughout the world: and for want of victuals the army mutinied, and slew him. An usual consequence of famine is the *pestilence*, and the *pestilence* is the third distinguishing calamity of this period, This pestilence, according to § Zonaras, arising from Ethiopia, while Gallus and Volusian were emperors, pervaded all the Roman provinces, and for fifteen years together incredibly exhausted them; and so learned a man as Lipsius declares, that he never read of any greater plague, for the space of time that it lasted, or of land that it overspread. Zosimus, speaking of the devastations of the Scythians in the reign of Gallus before mentioned, farther addeth that || the pestilence not less pernicious than the war, destroyed whatever was left of human kind, and made such havock as it had

* Vide Trebell. Pollio. de triginte tyrannis. Hist. Aug. Script. VI. p. 184, &c. Edit. Salmasii.

† Zosim. in Gall. Lib. 1. Sect. 26.

‡ Joan. Malalæ. Chronograph. p. 400. Edit. Oxon. 1691.

§ Zonar. in Gall. & Volus. Lipsius de Constantia. lib. 2. cap. 23.

|| Zosim. ibid.

had never done in former times. He saith also, that in the reign of Gallienus, * such a grievous pestilence as never happened at any time before, rendered the calamities inflicted by the barbarians more moderate. He saith afterwards too in the reign of Claudius, that the † pestilence seizing on the Romans as well as the barbarians, many of the army died, and also Claudius the emperor. Dionysius in ‡ Eusebius, treating of the same time, mentions the *war* and the *famine* and the *pestilence*, as succeeding one another in their natural order. St. Cyprian too mentions § all the three together, as troubling the world more at that time than at any other. He wrote also a || treatise upon this very pestilence, which he intitled *De mortalitate*, as if he had taken the name from the prophecy which had predicted it. In short, without alledging more testimonies, Eutropius affirms of Gallus and Volusian, that ** their reign was remarkable only for the pestilence and diseases and sickness. Orosius †† asserts much the same thing: and Trebellius Pollio likewise ‡‡ informs us, that in the reign of Gallienus the pestilence was so great that five thousand men died in one day. When the countries lie thus uncultivated, uninhabited, unfrequented, the *wild beasts* multiply, and come into the towns to devour men; which is the fourth distinguishing calamity of this period. This would appear a probable consequence of the former calamities, if history had recorded nothing of it: but we read in history that §§ five hundred wolves together entered into a city, which was deserted by its inhabitants, and where the younger Maximin chanced to be. It is well known, that the Heathens maliciously ascribed all public ca-

* Zosim. *ibid.* Sect. 37.

† Zosim. *ibid.* Sect. 46.

‡ Euseb. *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. 7. Cap. 22.

§ *Ibid.* p. 130.

|| Vide Edit. Felli. p. 110.

** Eutrop. Lib. 9. Cap. 5.

†† Oros. *Hist.* Lib. 7. Cap. 21.

‡‡ Trebell. Pollio in Gall. p. 177. *ibid.*

§§ Julius Capitolin. in Max. Jun. p. 150. *ibid.*

lamities to the Christians, and among them we find objected * the wars which they were obliged to wage with lions and wild beasts ; as we may collect from Arnobius, who wrote soon after this time. The color of the *pale horse* is very suitable to the mortality of this period ; and the proclamation for death and destruction is fitly made by a creature like an eagle that watches for carcases. This period continued from Maximin to Diocletian about fifty years.

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?

11. And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The following seals have nothing extrinsecal, like the proclamation of the living creatures, to determine from what quarter we must expect their completion ; but they are sufficiently distinguished by their internal marks and characters. The fifth seal or period is remarkable for dreadful persecution of the Christians, who are represented (ver. 9.) lying *under the altar*, (for the scene is still in the tabernacle or temple) as sacrifices newly slain and offered to God, they cry *aloud* (ver. 10.) for the Lord to *judge and avenge* their cause ; that is, the cruelties exercised upon them were of so barbarous and atrocious a nature, as to deserve and provoke the vengeance of the Lord. *White robes are given unto every one of them* (ver. 11.) as a token of their justification and acceptance with God ; and they are exhorted to *rest for a season*, till the number of the martyrs be completed, when they shall receive their full reward, as we shall see hereafter.

There

* Arnob. advers. Gentes. Lib. 1. p. 5. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1651.

There were other persecutions before, but this was by far the most considerable, the tenth and last general persecution which was begun by Diocletian, and continued by others, and lasted longer, and extended farther, and was sharper and more bloody than any or all preceding; and therefore this was particularly predicted. Eusebius and Lactantius, who were two eye-witnesses, have * written large accounts of it. Orosius † asserts, that this persecution was longer and more cruel than all the past; for it raged incessantly for ten years by burning the churches, proscribing the innocent, and slaying the martyrs. Sulpicius Severus too ‡ describes it as the most bitter persecution, which for ten years together depopulated the people of God; at which time all the world almost was stained with the sacred blood of the martyrs, and was never more exhausted by any wars. So that this became a memorable æra to the Christians, under the name of the æra of Diocletian, or as it is otherwise called the æra of martyrs.

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind:

14. And the heaven departed as a scrole when it is rolled together: and every mountain and island were moved out of their places:

15. and the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains;

16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 8. cum supplemento. Lactantius de Mortibus Persecut. Cap. 7. &c.

† Oros. Hist. Lib. 7. Cap. 25. p. 528. Edit. Havercamp.

‡ Sulp. Sever. Hist. Sacr. Lib. 2. p. 99. Edit. Elzevir. 1656.

17. For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?

The sixth seal or period produceth mighty changes and revolutions, which according to the prophetic stile are expressed by great commotions in the earth and in the heavens. The very same images, the very same expressions are employed by other prophets concerning the mutations and alterations of religions and governments : and why may they not therefore with equal fitness and propriety be applied to one of the greatest and most memorable revolutions which ever were in the world, the subversion of the Heathen religion, and establishment of the Christian, which was begun by Constantine the great, and was completed by his successors ? The series of the prophecy requires this application, and all the phrases and expressions will easily admit of such a construction. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, (ver. 12.) and lo, there was a great earth-quake, or rather a great concussion ;* for the word in the original comprehends the shaking of *heaven* as well as of *earth*. The same phrase is used by the prophet Haggai (ii. 6, 21.) concerning the first coming of Christ, *I will shake the heavens and the earth :* and this shaking, as the apostle saith, (Heb. xii. 27.) *signifieth the removing of those things which are shaken ;* and so the prophet Haggai himself explains it, *I will shake the heavens and the earth, And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the Heathen :* And where was ever a greater concussion or removal, than when Christianity was advanced to the throne of Paganism, and idolatry gave place to the true religion ? Then follow the particular effects of this general concussion, (ver. 12, 13, 14.) *And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood ; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind : And the heavens departed as a scrole when it is rolled together ; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*
Isaiah

Isaiah speaketh much in the same manner concerning Babylon and Idumea; (xiii. 10. xxxiv. 4.) *For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine: And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scrole, and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree: And Jeremiah concerning the land of Judah, (iv. 23, 24.) I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light: I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly: And Ezekiel concerning Egypt, (xxxii. 7.) And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light: And Joel concerning Jerusalem, (ii. 10, 31.) The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come: And our Saviour himself also concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, (Matt. xxiv. 29.) The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. Now it is certain, that the fall of any of these cities and kingdoms was not of greater concern and consequence to the world, nor more deserving to be described in such pompous figures, than the fall of the Pagan Roman empire, when the great lights of the heathen world, *the sun, moon and stars*, the powers civil and ecclesiastical, were all eclipsed and obscured, the heathen emperors and cæsars were slain, the heathen priests and augurs were extirpated, the heathen officers and magistrates were removed, the heathen temples were demolished, and their revenues appropriated to better uses. It is customary with the prophets, after they have described a thing the most symbolical and figura-*

tive diction, to represent the same again in plainer language : and the same method is observed here, (ver. 15, 16, 17.) *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man,* that is Maximian, Galerius, Maximin, Maxentius, Licinius, &c. with all their adherents and followers, were so routed and dispersed, that they *bide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us* ; expressions used, as in other prophets, (Is. ii. 19, 21. Hos. x. 8. Luke xxiii. 30.) to denote the utmost terror and consternation : *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb ; For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?* This is therefore a triumph of Christ over his heathen enemies, and a triumph after a severe persecution ; so that the time and all the circumstances, as well as the series and order of the prophecy, agree perfectly with this interpretation. * Galerius, † Maximin, and ‡ Licinius made even a public confession of their guilt, recalled their decrees and edicts against the Christians, and acknowledged the just judgments of God and of Christ in their destruction.

C H A P. VII.

1. **A**ND after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3. Saying,

* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 8. Cap. 17. De Vita Constant. Lib. 1. Cap. 57. Lactantius de Mort. Persecut. Cap. 33. &c.

† Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 9. Cap. 9, 10, 11. De Vita Constant. Lib. 1. Cap. 59. Lactant. ibid. Cap. 49.

‡ Euseb. de Vita Constant. Lib. 2. Cap. 18.

3. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed : *and there were* sealed an hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

5. Of the tribe of Juda *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad *were* sealed twelve thousand.

6. Of the tribe of Aser *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses *were* sealed twelve thousand.

7. Of the tribe of Simeon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Isachar *were* sealed twelve thousand.

8. Of the tribe of Zabulon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin *were* sealed twelve thousand.

9. After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ;

10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12. Saying, Amen : Blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes ? and whence came they ?

14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

What follows in this chapter is still a continuation of the sixth seal, for the seventh seal is not opened till the beginning of the next chapter. It is a description of the state of the church in Constantine's time, of the peace and protection that it should enjoy under the civil powers, and of the great accession that should be made to it both of Jews and Gentiles. *Four angels* (ver. 1, 2, 3.) are ordered by another angel to restrain *the four winds* from blowing with violence on any part of the world; to shew that these were halcyon days, wherein the former wars and persecutions should cease, and peace and tranquillity be restored for a season. Eusebius is very copious upon this subject in several parts of his writings; and hath* applied that passage of the psalmist in the version of the Seventy, (Psal. xlv. 8, 9) *Come hither, and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders he hath wrought in the earth: He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire;* which things, saith he, being manifestly fulfilled in our times, we rejoice over them. Lactantius also† saith in the same triumphant strain, that “tranquillity being restored throughout

* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. 10. Cap. 1.

† Lactantius de Mort. Persecut. Cap. 1.

throughout the world, the church which was lately ruined riseth again. Now after the violent agitations of so great a tempest, a calm air and the desired light become resplendent. Now God hath relieved the afflicted. Now he hath wiped away the tears of the sorrowful." These are testimonies of contemporary writers ; and some * medals of Constantine are still preserved with the head of this emperor on one side and this inscription CONSTANTINUS AUG. and on the reverse BEATA TRANQUILLITAS, *Blessed tranquillity*. During this time of tranquillity *the servants of God were to be sealed in their foreheads*. It is an expression in allusion to the ancient custom of marking servants in their foreheads to distinguish what they were, and to whom they belonged. Now among Christians baptism being the seal of the covenant between God and man, is therefore by ancient writers † often called the *seal*, the *sign*, the *mark* and *character* of the Lord : and it was the ‡ practice in early times, as it is at present, to make the sign of the cross upon the foreheads of the parties baptized. The same sign of the cross was also made at confirmation ; and upon many other occasions the Christians signed themselves with the sign of the cross in their foreheads, as a token that they were not ashamed of a crucified master, that on the contrary they gloried in the cross of Christ, and triumphed in that symbol and representation of it. The *sealing* therefore *of the servants of God in their foreheads* at this juncture can imply no less, than that many converts should be baptized, and those, who before, in times of persecution, had been compelled to worship God in private, should now make a free, open, and public profession of their religion ; and that such an

ac-

* See Daubuz. p. 311.

† See Mede, p. 511. Bingham's Antiquities. B. 11. Ch. 1. Sect. 6 & 7.

‡ See Cave's Primitive Christianity. Part. 1. Chap. 10. Bingham, *ibid.* Ch. 9. Sect. 4. &c.

accession was made to the church, every one knoweth who knoweth any thing of the history of this time.

As the church of Christ was first formed out of the Jewish church and nation, so here (ver. 4--8.) the spiritual Israel is first mentioned; and the number of the thousands of Israel is that of the twelve patriarchs multiplied by the twelve apostles, which we shall find to be a sacred number throughout the Revelation. But the twelve tribes are not enumerated here in the same method and order, as they are in other places of holy scripture. Judah hath the first rank and precedence, because from him descended the Messiah. Dan is entirely omitted, and Ephraim is not mentioned, because they were the principal promoters of idolatry, and therefore Levi is substituted in the room of the one, and Joseph is mentioned instead of the other. The children too of the bond-women and of the free-women are confounded together, there being (Gal. iii. 28.) *in Christ Jesus neither bond nor free*. Besides some of all the tribes of Israel, there was *an innumerable multitude of all nations and tongues, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands*, (ver. 9, 10.) who received and embraced the gospel: and as Sulpicius Severus * says, it is wonderful how much the Christian religion prevailed at this time. The historians, who have written of this reign, † relate how even the most remote and barbarous nations were converted to the faith, Jews as well as Gentiles. One historian in particular ‡ affirms, that at the time when Constantine took possession of Rome after the death of Maxentius, there were baptized more than twelve thousand Jews and Heathens, besides women and children. The angels also (ver. 11, 12.) join in the celebration of God upon this occasion: for if *there is joy* (Luke xv. 10.) *in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth*, much more may those heavenly spirits

* Sulpic. Sever. Sacr. Hist. Lib. 2. p. 100. Edit. Elzevir. 1656.

† Socratis Hist. Eccles. Lib. 1. Cap. 18, 19, 20. Sozomen. Hist. Eccles. Lib. 2. Cap. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c. &c.

‡ Abul Pharajii Hist. Dyn. 7. p. 85. Vers. Pocockii.

spirits rejoice at the conversion of whole countries and nations. Then one of the elders (ver. 13--17-) explains to St. John some particulars relating to this innumerable multitude of all nations. They have *palms in their hands*, as tokens of their victory and triumph over tribulation and persecution. They are *arrayed in white robes*, as emblems of their sanctity and justification thro' the merits and death of Christ. They are, like the children of Israel, arrived at their Canaan or land of rest, and they shall no more suffer *hunger, or thirst, or heat*, as they did in the wilderness. They are now happily freed from all their former troubles and molestations; and their Heathen adversaries shall no more prevail against them. This period we may suppose to have continued, with some little interruption, from the reign of Constantine the great to the death of Theodosius the great, about 70 years.

C H A P. VIII.

1. **A**ND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4. And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand.

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thundrings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound.

The

The seventh seal or period is of much longer duration, and comprehends many more events than any of the former seals. It comprehends indeed seven periods distinguished by the sounding of seven trumpets. At the opening of this seal (ver. 1.) *there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.* This *silence of half an hour* is a sign that the peace of the church would continue but for a short season. It is an interval and pause as it were between the foregoing and the succeeding visions. It is a mark of solemnity, to procure attention, and to prepare the mind for great and signal events; and not without an allusion to a ceremony among the Jews. As Philo * informs us, the incense used to be offered before the morning, and after the evening sacrifice: and while the sacrifices were made, (2 Chron. xxix. 25-28.) the voices, and instruments, and trumpets sounded; while the priest went into the temple to burn incense, (Luke i. 10.) all were silent, and the people prayed without to themselves. Now this was the morning of the church, and therefore the silence precedes the sounding of the trumpets. It was necessary, before the trumpets could be sounded, that they should be *given* (ver. 2.) to the seven archangels, who were to execute the will of God, and to sound the trumpets each in his season. At the same time (ver. 3, 4, 5.) *another angel*, like the priest, *having a golden censer*, offereth incense *with the prayers of all saints*; and then fileth the censer *with fire of the altar*, and *casteth it into the earth*: as in Ezekiel (x. 2.) *coals of fire* are taken *from between the cherubim*, and scattered over Jerusalem, to denote the judgments of God to be executed upon that city. Whereupon immediately ensue *voices, and thundrings, and lightnings, and an earthquake*, the usual prophetic signs and preludes of great calamities and commotions upon earth. Then the angels (ver. 6.) *prepare themselves to sound*: and as the *seals* foretold the state and condition of the Roman empire before and till it be-

came

* Philo de Victimis. p. 836. Edit. Paris. 1640.

came Christian, so the *trumpets* foreshow the fate and condition of it afterwards. *The sound of the trumpet*, as Jeremiah (iv. 19.) says, and as every one understands it, is *the alarm of war*: and the sounding of these trumpets is designed to rouse and excite the nations against the Roman empire, called *the third part* of the world, as perhaps including the third part of the world, and being seated principally in Europe, the third part of the world at that time.

7. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

At the sounding of the first trumpet (ver. 7.) the barbarous nations, like a storm of *hail and fire mingled with blood*, invade the Roman territories; and destroy *the third part of trees*, that is the trees of the third part of the earth, and *the green grass*, that is both old and young, high and low, rich and poor together. Theodosius the great died in the year 395; and no sooner was he dead, than the * Huns, Goths and other barbarians, like hail for multitude, and breathing fire and slaughter, broke in upon the best provinces of the empire both in the east and west, with greater success than they had ever done before. But by this trumpet, I conceive, were principally intended the irruptions and depredations of the Goths † under the conduct of the famous Alaric, who began his incursions in the same year 395, first ravaged Greece, then wasted Italy, besieged Rome, and was bought off at an exorbitant price, besieged it again in the year 410, took and plundered the city, and set fire to it in several places. Philostorgius, who lived in and wrote of these times, saith that “ the sword of the barbarians destroyed the

* Socratis Eccles. Hist. Lib. 6. Cap. 1. Sozomen. Lib. 8. Cap. 1. Zosimi Hist. Lib. 5. & 6. Pauli Orosii Hist. Lib. 7. Cap. 37. &c. Car. Sigonii Hist. de Occidentali Imperio Lib. 10.

† Zozim. Oros. Sigon. ibid. &c. Philostorgius, Lib. 11 & 12.

the greatest multitude of men; and among other calamities dry heats with flashes of flame and whirlwinds of fire occasioned various and intolerable terrors; yea, and hail greater than could be held in a man's hand fell down in several places, weighing as much as eight pounds." Well therefore might the prophet compare these incursions of the barbarians to *hail and fire mingled with blood*. Claudian in like manner compares them to * a storm of *hail* in his poem on this very war. Jerome also † saith of some of these barbarians, "that they came on unexpectedly every where, and marching quicker than report, spared not religion, nor dignities, nor age, nor had compassion on crying infants; those were compelled to die, who had not yet begun to live." So truly did they destroy the *trees* and the *green grass* together.

8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood:

9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

At the sounding of the second trumpet (ver. 8, 9.) *as it were a great mountain burning with fire*, that is a great warlike nation or hero, (for in the stile of poetry, which is near akin to the stile of prophecy, heroes are compared to mountains;) *cast into the sea, turneth the third part into blood, and destroyeth the fishes and the ships therein*; that is, falling on the Roman empire, maketh a sea of blood, with horrible destruction of the cities and inhabitants: for *waters*, as the angel afterwards (xvii. 15.) explains them to St. John, *are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*, and the *third part* is all along the Roman empire;

* Claudian de Bello Getico. ver. 173.

† Hieron. Epist. 84. de morte Fabiolæ. Col. 661. Tom. 4. Par. 2. Edit. Benedict.

empire; for it possessed in Asia and Africa, as much as it wanted in Europe to make up the third part of the world, and the principal part was in Europe, the third part of the world, at that time. The next great ravagers after Alaric and his Goths, were Attila and his Huns, who for the space of fourteen years as * Sigonius says, shook the east and west with the most cruel fear, and deformed the provinces of each empire with all kind of plundering, slaughter, and burning. They † first wasted Thrace, Macedon and Greece, putting all to fire and sword, and compelled the eastern emperor, Theodosius the second, to purchase a shameful peace. Then Attila turned his arms against the western emperor, Valentinian the third; entered Gaul with seven hundred thousand men, and not content with taking and spoiling, set most of the cities on fire. But at length being there vigorously opposed, he fell upon Italy, took and destroyed Aquileia with several other cities, slaying the inhabitants, and laying the buildings in ashes, and ‡ filled all places between the Alps and Apennine with flight, depopulation, slaughter, servitude, burning, and desperation. He was preparing to march to Rome, but was diverted from his purpose by a solemn embassy from the emperor, and the promise of an annual tribute; and so concluding a truce, retired out of Italy, and passed into his own dominions beyond the Danube. Such a man might properly be compared to a great mountain burning with fire, who really was, as he called himself § *the scourge of God, and the terror of men*, and boasted that he was sent into the world by God for this purpose, that as the executioner of his just anger he might fill the earth with all kind of evils, and he bounded his cruelty and passion by nothing less than blood and burning.

10. And

* Sigonius de Occidentali Imperio. Lib. 13.

† Sigonius ibid. Jornandes de rebus Get. &c. &c.

‡ Sigon. ibid. Ann. 452.

§ Sigon. ibid.

10. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters :

11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood : and the third part of the waters became wormwood : and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

At the sounding of the third trumpet (ver. 10, 11.) a great prince appears like *a star shooting from heaven to earth*; a similitude not unusual in poetry. His coming therefore is sudden and unexpected, and his stay but short. *The name of the star is called Wormwood*, and he infects *the third part of the rivers and fountains with the bitterness of wormwood*; that is, he is a bitter enemy, and proveth the author of grievous calamities to the Roman empire. The *rivers and fountains* have a near connexion with the *sea*: and it was within two years after Attila's retreat from Italy, that Valentinian was murdered, and Maximus who had caused him to be murdered reigning in his stead, * Genferic the king of the Vandals settled in Africa was solicited by Eudoxia the widow of the deceased emperor, to come and revenge his death. Genferic accordingly embarked with three hundred thousand Vandals and Moors, and arrived upon the Roman coasts in June 455, the emperor and people not expecting nor thinking of any such enemy. He landed his men, and marched directly towards Rome; whereupon the inhabitants flying into the woods and mountains, the city fell an easy prey into his hands. He abandoned it to the cruelty and avarice of his soldiers, who plundered it for fourteen days together, not only spoiling the private houses and palaces, but stripping the public buildings, and even the churches of their riches and ornaments. He then set sail again for

* Evagrii Hist. Eccles. Lib. 2. Cap. 7. Zonaræ Annal. Lib. 13. in fine. Sigonius de imperio Occidentali. Lib. 14. Ann. 455. &c. &c.

for Africa, carrying away with him immense wealth and an innumerable multitude of captives, together with the empress Eudoxia and her two daughters: and left the state so weakened, that in a little time it was utterly subverted.

12. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them *was* darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

At the sounding of the fourth trumpet (ver. 12.) *the third part of the sun, moon, and stars*, that is the great lights of the Roman empire, are eclipsed and *darkened*, and remain in darkness for some time. Genseric left the western empire in a weak and desperate condition. It struggled hard, and gasped as it were for breath thro' * eight short and turbulent reigns, for the space of twenty years, and at length expired in the year 476 under Momyllus, or Augustulus as he was named in derision, being a diminutive Augustus. This change was effected by Odoacer king of the Heruli, who coming to Rome with an army of barbarians, stripped Momyllus of the imperial robes, put an end to the very name of the western empire, and caused himself to be proclaimed King of Italy. His kingdom indeed was of no long duration; for after a reign of sixteen years he was overcome and slain † in the year 493 by Theodoric King of the Ostrogoths, who founded the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy, which continued about sixty years, under his successors. Thus was the Roman *sun* extinguished in the western emperor; but the other lesser luminaries, the *moon* and *stars*, still subsisted; for Rome was still allowed to have her senate, and consuls, and other subordinate magistrates as before. Odoacer ‡ at first suppress-

* Sigonius de Occidentali Imperio. Lib. 14, & 15 in initio.

† Sigonius ibid. Lib. 15. in fine. Procop. de Bell. Goth. Lib.

1. Cap. 1.

‡ Sigonius ibid. Lib. 15. Ann. 476 & 479.

fed them, but after two or three years restored them again. Theodoric * changed none of the Roman institutes; he retained the senate, and consuls, and patricians; and all the ancient magistrates, and committed these offices only to Romans. These lights, we may suppose, shone more faintly under barbarian kings than under Roman emperors; but they were not totally suppressed and extinguished, till after the kingdom of the Ostrogoths was destroyed by the emperor of the east's lieutenants, and Italy was made a province of the eastern empire. Longinus was † sent then in the year 566 by the emperor Justin II. to govern Italy with absolute authority: and he changed the whole form of the government, abolished the senate, and consuls, and all the former magistrates in Rome and Italy, and in every city of note constituted a new governor with the title of Duke. He himself presided over all; and residing at Ravenna, and not at Rome, he was called the Exarch of Ravenna, as were also his successors in the same office. Rome was degraded to the same level with other places, and from being the queen of cities and empress of the world was reduced to a poor dukedom, and made tributary to Ravenna which she had used to govern.

13. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound.

Notice is then proclaimed by an angel (ver. 13) that the three other trumpets sound to still greater and more terrible plagues, and are therefore distinguished from the former by the name of *woes*. The design of this messenger is to raise our attention to the following trumpets; and the following we shall find to be more strongly marked than the foregoing. The fore-

* Sigonius *ibid* Lib. 16. Ann. 494.

† Sigonii *Hist. de Regno Italiæ*, Lib. 1. Blondi *Decad. primæ* Lib. 8.

going relate chiefly to the downfall of the western empire; the two following relate chiefly to the downfall of the eastern empire. The foregoing are described more succinctly, and contain a less compass of time; the following are set forth with more particular circumstances, and are of longer duration as well as of larger description.

C H A P. IX.

I. **A**ND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2. And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace: and the sun and the air were darkened, by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7. And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the *teeth* of lions.

9. And they had breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails : and their power was to hurt men five months.

11. And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.

12. One woe is past, *and* behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

At the sounding of the fifth trumpet (ver. 1, 2, 3.) *a star fallen from heaven*, meaning the wicked impostor Mohammed, *opened the bottomless pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, and the sun and the air were darkened* by it ; that is, a false religion was set up, which filled the world with darkness and error ; and swarms of Saracen or Arabian *locusts* overspread the earth. A false prophet is very fitly typified by a blazing *star* or meteor. The Arabians likewise are properly compared to *locusts*, not only because numerous armies frequently are so, but also because swarms of locusts often arise from Arabia ; and also because in the plagues of Egypt, to which constant allusion is made in these trumpets, *the locusts* (Exod. x. 13.) are *brought by an east-wind*, that is from Arabia, which lay eastward of Egypt ; and also because in the book of Judges (vii. 12.) the people of Arabia are compared to *locusts* or *grasshoppers* for *multitude*, for in the original the word for both is the same. As the natural locusts * are bred in pits and holes of the earth, so these mystical locusts are truly *infernal*, and proceed with the smoke *from the bottomless pit*. It is too a remarkable coincidence, that at this time *the sun and the air were* really darkened. For we learn from an † eminent Arabian historian, that “ in the seventeenth year of Heraclius half the body of the sun was eclipsed, and this defect continued from the former Tisrin to Haziran, (that is

from

* Vide Gesner. de Insect. Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. 11. Cap. 29. Sect. 35. Edit. Harduin.

† Abul-Pharajii Hist. Dyn. 8. p. 99. Vers. Pocockii.

from October to June) so that only a little of its light appeared." The seventeenth year of Heraclius * coincides with the year of Christ 626, and with the 5th year of the Hegira; and at this time Mohammed was training and exercising his followers in depredations at home, to fit and prepare them for greater conquests abroad.

It was commanded them (ver. 4.) that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; which demonstrates that these were not natural, but symbolical locusts. The like injunctions were given to the Arabian officers and soldiers. When Yezid was marching with the army to invade Syria, Abubeker charged him † with this among other orders; "Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat." Their commission is to *hurt only those men who have not the seal of God in their foreheads*; that is those who are not the true servants of God, but are corrupt and idolatrous Christians. Now from history it appears evidently, that in those countries of Asia, Africa and Europe, where the Saracens extended their conquests, the Christians were generally guilty of idolatry in the worshipping of saints, if not of images, and it was the pretence of Mohammed and his followers to chastise them for it, and to re-establish the unity of the Godhead. The parts which remained the freest from the general infection were Savoy, Piedmont, and the southern parts of France, which were afterwards the nurseries and habitations of the Waldenses and Albigenses: and it was very memorable, that ‡ when the Saracens approached these parts, they were defeated with great slaughter by the famous Charles Martel in several engagements.

* Blair's Chron. Tab. No. 33. Abul-Pharaj. Dyn. 9 p. 102. Elmacini Hist. Saracen. Lib. 1. p. 6.

† Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens. Vol. 1. p. 25.

‡ Petavii Rationar. Temp. Part 1. Lib. 8. Cap. 5. Mezeray Abrege Chronol. A. D. 732.

As they were to hurt only the corrupt and idolatrous Christians, so these (ver. 5, 6.) they were not to *kill* but only to *torment*, and should bring such calamities upon the earth, as should make men weary of their lives. Not that it could be supposed that the Saracens would not kill many thousands in their incursions. On the contrary their angel (ver. 11.) hath the name of *the destroyer*. They might *kill* them as individuals, but still they should not *kill* them as a political body, as a state or empire. They might greatly harass and *torment* both the Greek and the Latin churches, but they should not utterly extirpate the one or the other. They besieged Constantinople, and * even plundered Rome: but they could not make themselves masters of either of those capital cities. The Greek empire suffered most from them, as it lay nearest to them. They dismembered it of Syria, and Egypt, and some other of its best and richest provinces; but they were never able to subdue and conquer the whole. As often as they besieged Constantinople, they were repulsed and defeated. They attempted it † in the reign of Constantine Pogonatus A. D. 672; but their men and ships were miserably destroyed by the sea-fire invented by Callinicus, and after seven years fruitless pains they were compelled to raise the siege, and to conclude a peace. They attempted it again ‡ in the reign of Leo Isauricus A. D. 718; but they were forced to desist by famine, and pestilence, and losses of various kinds. In this attempt they exceeded their commission, and therefore they were not crowned with their usual success. The taking of this city, and the putting an end to this empire, was a work reserved for another power, as we shall see under the next trumpet.

In

* Sigonii Hist. de Regno Italiæ Lib. 5. Ann. 846.

† Theoph. Cedren. ad. ann. Const. 5. Zonaræ Annales Lib. 14. Cap. 20. &c. Petavii Rationar. Temp. Part 1. Lib. 8. Cap. 1. Blair's Chronol. Tab. No. 34. Part 2.

‡ Sigonii Hist. de Regno Italiæ Lib. 3. Anno. 718. Petav. ibid. Cap. 5.

In the following verses (7, 8, 9, 10.) the nature and qualities of these locusts are described, partly in allusion to the properties of natural locusts and the description given of them by the prophet Joel, and partly in allusion to the habits and manners of the Arabians, to shew that not real but figurative locusts were here intended. The first quality mentioned is their being *like unto horses prepared unto battle*; which is copied from Joel (ii. 4.) *The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and as horsemen, so shall they run.* Many authors have * observed that the head of a locust resembles that of an horse. The Italians therefore call them *cavalette*, or little horses. The Arabians too have in all ages been famous for their horses and horsemanship. Their strength is well known to consist chiefly in their cavalry.

Another distinguishing mark and character is their having *on their heads as it were crowns like gold*; which is an allusion to the head-dress of the Arabians, † who have constantly worn turbants or mitres, and boast of having those ornaments for their common attire, which are crowns and diadems with other people. The *crowns* also signify the kingdoms and dominions which they should acquire. For, as Mr. Mede ‡ excellently observes, “No nation had ever so wide a command, nor ever were so many kingdoms, so many regions subjugated in so short a space of time. It sounds incredible, yet most true it is; that in the space of eighty or not many more years, they subdued and acquired to the diabolical kingdom of Mohammed Palestine, Syria, both Armenia’s, almost all Asia Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary even to the river Niger, Portugal, Spain. Neither did their fortune or ambition stop here, till they had added also

* Vide Albertum, Aldrovandum, Theodoretum, &c. apud. Bochart. Hieroz. Part. Post. Lib. 4. Cap. 5.

† Arabes mitrati degunt. Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. 6. Cap. 28. Sect. 32. Edit. Harduin. Hic mitra velatus Arabs. Claudian de Laud. Stil. I. 156. Pocockii Not in Carm. Tograri Arab. pag. ult.

‡ Mede p. 468.

a great part of Italy, as far as to the gates of Rome ; moreover Sicily, Candia, Cyprus, and the other islands of the Mediterranean sea. Good God ! how great a tract of land ! how many *crowns* were here ! Whence also it is worthy of observation, that mention is not made here, as in the other trumpets, *of the third part* ; forasmuch as this plague fell no less without the bounds of the Roman empire than within it, and extend itself even to the remotest Indies.”

They had also *faces as the faces of men, and hair as the hair of women* : and the Arabians wore their beards, or at least mustachoes, as men ; while the hair of their heads was flowing or plaited like that of women ; as * Pliny and other ancient authors testify. Another property copied from Joel is their having *teeth as the teeth of lions* : that is strong to devour. So Joel describes the locusts (i. 6.) *as a nation, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great lion* : and it is wonderful how they bite and gnaw all things, as † Pliny says, even the doors of houses. They had also *breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron* : and the locusts have a hard shell or skin, which hath been called their armour. This figure is designed to express the defensive, as the former was the offensive arms of the Saracens. *And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.* Much the same comparison had been used by Joel, (ii. 5.) *Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap* : and ‡ Pliny affirms, that they fly with so great a noise of their wings, that they may be taken for birds. Their *wings, and the sound of their wings*, denote the swiftness and rapidity of their conquests ; and it is indeed astonishing, that in less than a century they erected an empire, which extended from India to Spain.

Moreover they are thrice compared unto *scorpions*, (ver. 3. 5, 10.) and *bad stings in their tails like unto scorpions* ;

* Plin. *ibid.* Solinus Cap. 33. p. 46. Edit. Salmasii. Crinitus quidam, &c. Ammian. Marcell. Lib. 31.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. 11. Cap. 29. Sect. 35. Edit. Harduin.

‡ Plin. *ibid.*

scorpions ; that is they should draw a poisonous train after them, and wherever they carried their arms, there also they should distil the venom of a false religion. It is farther added (ver. 11.) that *they had a king over them* ; the same person should exercise temporal as well as spiritual sovranty over them ; and the caliphs were their emperors, as well as the heads of their religion. The King is the same as the *star or angel of the bottomless pit*, whose name is *Abaddon* in Hebrew, and *Apollyon* in Greek, that is *the destroyer*. Mr. Mede* imagins, that this is some allusion to the name of *Obodas*, the common name of the kings of that part of Arabia from whence Mohammed came, as *Pbaraoh* was the common name of the kings of Egypt, and *Cesar* of the emperors of Rome ; and such allusions are not unusual in the stile of scripture. However that be, the name agrees perfectly well with Mohammed and the caliphs his successors, who were the authors of all those horrid wars and desolations, and openly taught and professed that their religion was to be propagated and established by the sword.

One difficulty, and the greatest of all, remains yet to be explained ; and that is the period of *five months* assigned to these locusts, which being twice mentioned, merits the more particular consideration. They *tormented men five months* ; (ver 5.) and again (ver. 10.) *their power was to hurt men five months*. It is said without doubt in conformity to the type ; for locusts † are observed to live about *five months*, that is from April to September. Scorpions too as § Bochart asserts, are noxious for no longer a term, the cold rendering them torpid and inactive. But of these locusts it is said, not that their duration or existence was only for *five months*, but their *power of hurting and tormenting men* continued *five months*. Now these months may either be months commonly so taken : or prophetic

* Mede, *ibid.* p. 470.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. 11. Cap. 29. Sect. 35. Edit. Hard. Bochart. Hieroz. Part Post. Lib. 4. Cap. 8. Col. 495.

§ Bochart. *ibid.* Lib. 4. Cap. 29. Col. 640.

phetic months, consisting each of 30 days, as St. John reckons them, and so making 150 years at the rate of each day for a year; or the number being repeated twice, the sums may be thought to be doubled, and *five months* and *five months* in prophetic computation will amount to 300 years. If these months be taken for common months, then, as the natural locusts live and do hurt only in the five summer-months, so the Saracens, in the five summer-months too, made their excursions, and retreated again in the winter. It appears that this was their usual practise, and particularly when * they first besieged Constantinople in the time of Constantine Pogonatus. For “from the month of April till September, they pertinaciously continued their siege, and then despairing of success, departed to Cyzicum, where they wintered, and in spring again renewed the war: and this course they held for seven years, as the Greek annals tell us.” If these months be taken for prophetic months or 150 years, it was within that space of time that the Saracens made their principal conquests. Their empire might subsist much longer, but their *power of hurting and tormenting men* was exerted chiefly within that period. Read the history of the Saracens, and you will find that their greatest exploits were performed, their greatest conquests were made between the † year 612 when Mohammed first *opened the bottomless pit*, and began publicly to teach and propagate his imposture, and the year 762 when the caliph Almanzor built Bagdad, to fix there the seat of his empire, and called it *the city of peace*. Syria, Persia, India, and the greatest part of Asia; Egypt, and the greatest part of Africa; Spain, and some parts of Europe, were all subdued

* Howel's Hist. of the World. Part 3. Chap. 4. Sect. 7. p. 288. Cedreni Hist. Compend. p. 437. Edit. Paris p. 345. Edit. Venet. Vide etiam Theopanis Chronograph. p. 294. Edit. Paris. p. 234. Edit. Venet.

† Prideaux Life of Mahomet. p. 14. 8th. Edit. Elmacini Hist. Saracen. Lib. 1. Cap. 1. p. 3. & Lib. 2. Cap. 3. p. 102. Abul-Pharajii Hist. Dyn. 9. p. 141. Vers. Pocockii. Blair's Chronol. Tab. No. 36. Part. 2d.

duced in the intermediate time. But when the caliphs, who before had removed from place to place, fixed their habitation at Bagdad, then the Saracens ceased from their excursions and ravages like locusts, and became a settled nation ; then they made no more such rapid and amazing conquests as before, but only engaged in common and ordinary wars like other nations ; then their power and glory began to decline, and their empire by little and little to moulder away ; then they had no longer, like the prophetic locusts, *one king over them*, Spain * having revolted in the year 756 and set up another caliph in opposition to the reigning house of Abbas. If these months be taken doubly, or for 300 years then according to † Sir Isaac Newton, “ the whole time that the caliphs of the Saracens reigned with a temporal dominion at Damascus and Bagdad together was 300 years, viz. from the year 637 to the year 936 inclusive,” when § their empire was broken and divided into several principalities or kingdoms. So that let these *five months* be taken in any possible construction, the event will still answer, and the prophecy will still be fulfilled ; tho’ the second method of interpretation and application appears much more probable than either the first or the third.

In the conclusion it is added, (ver. 12.) *One woe is past, and behold there come two woes more hereafter.* This is added not only to distinguish the woes, and to mark more strongly each period, but also to suggest that some time will intervene between this first woe of the Arabian locusts, and the next of the Euphratean horsemen. The similitude between the locusts and Arabians is indeed so great that it cannot fail of striking every curious observer : and a farther resemblance is || noted by Mr. Daubuz, “ that there hath happened in the extent of this torment a coincidence of the event with

* Elmacini Hist. Saracen. Lib. 2. Cap. 3. p. 101. Blair ibid.

† Sir Isaac Newton on the Apoc. Chap. 3. p. 305. See likewise p. 91. of Mr. Jackson’s Address to the Deists : wherein are some pertinent completion of this and the succeeding Woe.

§ Elmacin. Lib. 3. Cap. 1. p. 203. Blair’s Tab. No. 39.

|| Daubuz, p. 409.

with the nature of the locusts. The Saracens have made inroads into all those parts of Christendom where the natural locusts are wont to be seen and known to do mischief, and no where else : And that too in the same proportion. Where the locusts are seldom seen there the Saracens stayed little : where the natural locusts are often seen, there the Saracens abode most ; and where they breed most, there the Saracens had their beginning, and greatest power. This may be easily verified by history."

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God,

14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand : and I heard the number of them.

17. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone : and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions ; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone.

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails : for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood : which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk :

21. Neither

21. Neither repented they of their murders nor of their forceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

At the sounding of the sixth trumpet (ver. 13, 14, 15.) a voice proceeded *from the four horns of the golden altar*, (for the scene was still in the temple) ordering the angel of the sixth trumpet *to loose the four angels which were bound in the great river Euphrates*; and they were loosed accordingly. Such a voice proceeding *from the four horns of the golden altar* is a strong indication of the divine displeasure; and plainly intimates that the sins of men must have been very great, when the altar, which was their sanctuary and protection, called aloud for vengeance. *The four angels* are the four sultanies or four leaders of the Turks and Othmans. For there were four principal sultanies or kingdoms of the Turks, bordering upon the river Euphrates: * one at Bagdad founded by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix, as he is more usually called, in the year 1055: another at Damascus founded by Tagjuddaulas or Ducas in the year 1079: a third at Aleppo founded by Sjarfuddaulas or Melech in the same year 1079: and the fourth at Iconium in Asia Minor founded by Sedyduddaulas or Cutlu Muses, or his son, in the year 1080. These four sultanies subsisted several years afterwards; and the sultans were *bound* and restrained from extending their conquests farther than the territories and countries adjoining to the river Euphrates, primarily by the good providence of God, and secondarily by the croisades or expeditions of the European Christians into the holy land in the latter part of the eleventh, and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Nay, the European Christians took several cities and countries from them, and confined them within narrower bounds. But when an end was put to the croisades, and the Christians

* Elmacini Hist. Saracen. Lib. 3. Cap. 7 & 8. p. 271 & 284. Edit. Erpenii. Heylin's Cosm. B. 3. p. 726. Edit. 1703. Introduction to the Hist. of Asia. Chap. 11. Sect. 2 & 3. Sandys's Travels, B. 1. p. 34, 7th Edit.

tians totally abandoned their conquests in Syria and Palestine, and as they did in the latter part of the 13th century; then *the four angels on the river Euphrates were loosed*. Soliman Shah * the first chief and founder of the Othman race, retreating with his three sons from Jingiz Chan and the Tartars, would have passed the river Euphrates, but was unfortunately drowned, the time of *loosing the four angels* being not yet come. Discouraged at this sad accident, two of his sons returned to their former habitations: but Ortogrul the third, with his three sons Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, remained some time in those parts, and having obtained leave of Aladin the sultan of Iconium, he came with four hundred of his Turks, and settled in the mountains of Armenia. From thence they began their excursions; and the other Turks associating with them, and following their standard, they gained several victories over the Tartars on one side, and over the Christians on the other. Ortogrul † dying in the year 1288, Othman his son succeeded him in power and authority; and in the year 1299, as some say with the consent of Aladin himself, he was proclaimed sultan, and founded a new empire; and the people afterwards, as well as the new empire, were called by his name. For tho' they disclaim the name of *Turks*, and assume that of *Othmans*, yet nothing is more certain, than that they are a mixt multitude, the remains of the four sultanies above mentioned, as well as the descendents particularly of the house of Othman.

In this manner and at this time *the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men*, that is as before, the men of the Roman empire, and especially in Europe the third part of the world. The Latin or the western empire was broken to pieces under the four first trumpets; the Greek or eastern

* Pocockii Supplem. Abul-Pharaj. Hist. p. 41, 42. Herbelot. Bib. Orient. p. 822, 694, &c.

† Pocock. ibid. Herbelot. p. 694, 697.

eastern empire was cruelly *hurt* and *tormented* under the fifth trumpet; and here under the sixth trumpet it is to be *slain* and utterly destroyed. Accordingly all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries, which formerly belonged to the Greek or eastern Cæsars, the Othmans have conquered, and subjugated to their dominion. They first * passed over into Europe, in the reign of Orchan their second Emperor, and in the year 1357; they † took Constantinople in the reign of Mohammed their seventh emperor, and in the year 1453; and in time all the remaining parts of the Greek empire shared the fate of the capital city. The last of their conquests were ‡ Candia or the ancient Crete in 1669, and Cameniec in 1672. For the execution of this great work it is said that they *were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year*: which will admit either of a literal or a mystical interpretation: and the former will hold good, if the latter should fail. If it be taken literally, it is only expressing the same thing by different words, as *peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues* are jointly used in other places: and then the meaning is, that they were prepared and ready to execute the divine commission at any time or for any time, any *hour* or *day*, or *month*, or *year* that God should appoint. If it be taken mystically, and the *hour*, and *day*, and *month*, and *year* be a prophetic *hour*, and *day*, and *month*, and *year*, then a *year* (according to St. John's, who follows herein Daniel's computation) consisting of 360 days is 360 years, and a *month* consisting of 30 days is 30 years, and a *day* is a year, and an *hour* in the same proportion is 15 days; so that the whole period of the Othmans *slaying the third part of men*, or

sub-

* Pocockii Supplem. p. 43. Herbelot. p. 693. A. H. 758. æpit Decem. 25. 1356. Pocockii Index.

† Leunclav. Pandect. Hist. Turc. Cap. 129. p. 448. Edit. Paris, p. 399. Edit. Venet. Pocock. ibid. p. 47. Herbelot. p. 615. Prince Cantemir's Hist. of the Othman empire. B. 3. Chap. 1. Sect. 9. p. 103. Savage's Abridgment of Knolles and Rycaut Vol. 1. p. 180, &c.

‡ Prince Cantemir, B. 3. Chap. 12. Sect. 8. p. 262. Sect. 16. p. 265. Savag. ibid. Vol. 2. p. 192 & 200.

subduing the Christian states in the Greek or Roman empire, amounts to 391 years and 15 days. Now it is wonderfully remarkable, that the first conquest mentioned in history, of the Othmans over the Christians, was * in the year of the Hegira 680 and the year of Christ 1281. For Ortogrul "in that year (according to the accurate historian Saadi) crowned his victories with the conquest of the famous city of Kutahi upon the Greeks." Compute 391 years from that time, and they will terminate in the year 1672: and in that year, as it was hinted before, Mohammed the fourth † took Cameniec from the Poles, "and forty eight towns and villages in the territory of Cameniec were delivered up" to the sultan upon the treaty of peace. Whereupon Prince Cantemir hath made this memorable reflection, "This was the last victory by which any advantage accrued to the Othman state, or any city or province was annexed to the ancient bounds of the empire." Agreeably to which observation, he hath intitled the former part of his history *of the growth of the Othman empire*, and the following part *of the decay of the Othman empire*. Other wars and slaughters, as he says, have ensued. The Turks even besieged Vienna in 1683; but this exceeding the bounds of their commission they were defeated. Belgrade and other places may have been taken from them, and surrendered to them again: but still they have subdued no new state or potentate of Christendom now for the space of between 80 and 90 years; and in all probability they never may again, their empire appearing rather to decrease than increase. Here then the prophecy and the event agree exactly in the period of 391 years; and if more accurate and authentic histories of the Othmans were brought to light, and we knew the very day wherein Kutahi was taken as certainly as we know that wherein Cameniec was taken, the like exactness might also be found in the 15 days. But tho' the time be limited for the Othman's

slaying

* Prince Cantemir's Hist. B. 1. Chap. 2. Sect. 5. p. 10.

† Prince Cantemir's Hist. B. 3. Chap. 12. Sect. 18, 19, p. 265.

slaying the third part of men, yet no time is fixed for the duration of their empire; only this second woe will end, when the third woe, (xi. 14.) or the destruction of the beast, shall be at hand.

A description is then given (ver. 16, 17, 18, 19.) of the forces, and of the means and instruments, by which the Othmans should effect the ruin of the eastern empire. Their armies are described as very numerous, *myriads of myriads*; and who knoweth not what mighty armies the Othman emperors have brought into the field? When Mohammed the second besieged Constantinople, he had * about four hundred thousand men in his army, besides a powerful fleet of thirty larger and two hundred lesser ships. They are described too chiefly as *horsemen*; and so they are described both by Ezekiel and by Daniel, as there was occasion to observe in the last dissertation upon Daniel: and it is well known, that their armies consisted chiefly of cavalry, especially before the order of Janizaries was instituted by Amurath the first. The Janizaries may be the guard of the court, but the Timariots, or horsemen holding lands by serving in the wars, are the strength of the government: and these, as Heylin † affirms, are in all accounted between seven and eight hundred thousand fighting men; some say that they are a million; and besides these, there are Saphi's and other horsemen in the emperor's pay.

In the vision, that is in appearance, and not in reality, they had *breast-plates of fire, and of jacinēt* or hyacinth, and *brimstone*. The color of *fire* is red, of *hyacinth* blue, and of *brimstone* yellow: and this, as Mr. Daubuz ‡ observes, hath a literal accomplishment; for the Othmans, from the first time of their appearance, have affected to wear such warlike apparel of scarlet, blue,

* Laonicus Chalcocondylas de rebus Turcicis. Lib. 8. p. 203. Edit. Paris. p. 158 Edit. Venet.

† Heylin's Cosm. B. 3. p. 729. Edit. 1703. Sandys's Travels. B. 1. p. 38. 7th Edit.

‡ Daubuz, p. 444. See too Rycaut's Present State of the Othman Empire. B. 3. Chap. 3. Tournefort's Voyage. Vol. 2. Lett. 1. p. 36, &c.

and yellow." Of the Spahi's particularly some have red, and some have yellow standards, and others red or yellow mixt with other colors. In appearance too *the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*, to denote their strength, courage, and fierceness; and *out of their mouths issued fire, and smoak, and brimstone*. A manifest allusion to great guns and gun powder, which were invented under this trumpet, and were of such signal service to the Othmans in their wars. For *by these three was the third part of men killed*, by these the Othmans made such havoc and destruction in the Greek or eastern empire. Amurath the second * broke into Peloponnesus, and took several strong places by the means of his artillery. But his son Mohammed at the siege of Constantinople † employed such great guns, as were never made before. One is described to have been of such a monstrous size, that it was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen and by two thousand men. There were two more, each of which discharged a stone of the weight of two talents. Others emitted a stone of the weight of half a tallent. But the greatest of all discharged a ball of the weight of three talents, or about three hundred pounds; and the report of this cannon is said to have been so great, that all the country round about was shaken to the distance of forty furlongs. For forty days the wall was battered by these guns, and so many breaches were made, that the city was taken by assault, and an end put to the Grecian empire.

Moreover *they had power to do hurt by their tails*, as well as *by their mouths*, *their tails being like unto serpents*, and *having heads*. In this respect they very much resemble *the locusts*; only the different tails are accommodated to the different creatures, the tails of *scorpions to locusts*, the tails of *serpents with an head at each end to horses*. By this figure it is meant, that the Turks draw after them the same poisonous

train

* Chalcocond. ibid. Lib. 7.

† Chalcocond. ibid. Lib. 8. p. 203, 204. Edit. Paris. p. 158, 159. Edit. Venet.

train as the Saracens ; they profess and propagate the same imposture ; they do hurt not only by their conquests, but also by spreading their false doctrine ; and wherever they establish their dominion, there too they establish their religion. Many indeed of the Greek church remained, and are still remaining among them ; but they are * made to pay dearly for the exercise of their religion ; are subjected to a capitation-tax which is rigorously exacted from all above fourteen years of age, are burdened besides with the most heavy and arbitrary impositions upon every occasion ; are compelled to the lowest and most servile drudgery ; are abused in their persons, and robbed of their property ; have not only the mortification of seeing some of their friends and kindred daily apostatize to the ruling religion, but had even their children taken from them to be educated therein, of whom the more robust and hardy were trained up to the soldiery, the more weakly and tender were castrated for the seraglio : but notwithstanding these persecutions and oppressions some remains of the Greek church are still preserved among them, as we may reasonably conclude, to serve some great and mysterious ends of providence.

But tho' the Greek church was thus ruined and oppressed, *the rest of men* (ver. 20, 21.) *who were not killed by these plagues*, the Latin church which pretty well escaped these calamities, *yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils*, that is demons or second mediatory Gods, as it hath largely been shewn before, saints and angels, *and idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood*. From hence it is evident, that these calamities were inflicted upon the Christians for their idolatry, as the eastern churches were first in the crime, so they were first likewise in the punishment. At first they were visited by the plague of the Saracens, but this working no change or reformation, they were again chastised by the still greater plague of the Othmans ; were partly overthrown by the former, and were en-

* See Smith's and Rycant's accounts of the Greek church.

tirely ruined by the latter. What churches were then remaining, which were guilty of the like idolatry, but the western, or those in communion with Rome? And the western were not at all reclaimed by the ruin of the eastern, but persisted still in the worship of saints, and (what is worse) the worship of images, *which neither can see, nor bear, nor walk*: and the world is witness to the completion of this prophecy to this day. *Neither repented they of their murders, their persecutions and inquisitions, nor of their sorceries, their pretended miracles and revelations, nor of their fornication, their public stews and uncleanness, nor of their thefts, their exactions and impositions on mankind: and they are as notorious for their licentiousness and wickedness, as for their superstition and idolatry. As they therefore refused to take warning by the two former woes, the third woe, as we shall see, will fall with vengeance upon them.*

C H A P. X.

1. **A**ND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, cloathed with a cloud, and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.

2. And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left foot on the earth,

3. And cried with a loud voice *as when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5. And the angel which I saw **stand upon** the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven,

6. And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea

sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer :

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said Go, *and* take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea, and upon the earth.

9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it* and eat it up ; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth as sweet as hony.

10. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up ; and it was in my mouth sweet as hony : and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

St. John, in the conclusion of the last chapter, having touched upon the corruption of the western church, proceeds now to deliver some prophecies relating to this lamentable event. But before he enters upon this subject, he (and the church in him) is prepared for it by an august and consolatory vision. *Another mighty angel came down from heaven*, (ver. 1.) described somewhat like the angel in the three last chapters of Daniel, and in the first chapter of the Revelation. *He had in his band* (ver. 2.) *a little book*, or codicil different from the *book* mentioned before : and it was *open*, that all men might freely read and consider it. It was indeed a codicil to the larger book, and properly cometh under the sixth trumpet, to describe the state of the western church after the description of the state of the eastern : and this is with good reason made a separate and distinct prophecy, on account of the importance of the matter, as well as for engaging the

the greater attention. *He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth*, to show the extent of his power and commission: *and when he had cried aloud, (ver. 3.) seven thunders uttered their voices.* St. John would have written down (ver. 4.) *these things which the seven thunders uttered*, but was forbidden to do it. As we know not the subjects of *the seven thunders*, so neither can we know the reasons for suppressing them: but it may be conceived, that some things might be proper to be revealed to the apostle, and yet not to be communicated to the church. By these *seven thunders*, * Vitringa understands the seven great croisades or expeditions of the western Christians for the conquest of the holy land, and Daubuz the seven kingdoms which received and established the protestant reformation by law. But doth it not favor rather of vanity and presumption than of knowledge and wisdom, to pretend to conjecture what they are, when the Holy Spirit hath purposely concealed them? Then the angel (ver. 5, 6, 7.) *lifted up his hand to heaven*, like the angel in Daniel, (xii. 7.) *and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever*, the great creator of all things, *that the time shall not be yet*, but it shall be in the days of the seventh trumpet, that *the mystery of God shall be finished*, and the glorious state of his church be perfected, agreeably to the good things which he hath promised to *his servants the prophets*. This is said for the consolation of Christians, that tho' *the little book* describes the calamities of the western church, yet they shall all have a happy period under the seventh trumpet. St. John is then ordered (ver. 8, 9, 10.) *to eat the little book*, as Ezekiel (iii. 3.) did upon a like occasion: and he *ate it up*; he thoroughly considered, and digested it; and found it to be, as he was informed it would be, *sweet as honey in his mouth, but bitter in his stomach*. The knowledge of future things at first was pleasant, but the sad contents of the little book afterwards filled

* Vitring. in locum. p. 431. Daubuz. p. 469.

his soul with sorrow. But these contents were not to be sealed up like those of *the seven thunders*; this *little book* was to be published (ver. 11,) as well as the larger book of the Apocalyps; and as it concerned *kings and nations*, so it was to be made public for their use and information.

C H A P. XI.

1. **A**ND there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2. But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

3. And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three-score days cloathed in sackcloth.

4. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.

7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11. And after three days and an half, the spirit of life from God entered into them: and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.

13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14. The second woe is past, *and* behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

In the former part of this chapter, from the first verse to the fourteenth, are exhibited the contents of this little book. St. John is commanded (ver. 1.) to *measure* the inner court, *the temple of God, and the altar, and them who worship therein*, to shew that during all this period there were some true Christians, who conformed to the rule and measure of God's word. This measuring might allude more particularly to the Reformation from popery, which fell out under this sixth trumpet; and one of the moral causes of it was the Othmans taking of Constantinople, whereupon the Greeks flying from their own country, and bringing their books with them into the more western parts of Europe, proved the happy occasion of the revival of learning; as the revival of learning opened mens eyes, and proved the happy occasion of the reformation. But tho' *the inner court*, which includes the smaller number, was measured, yet *the outer court*, which implies the far greater part, was *left out* (ver. 2.) and rejected, as being in the possession of Christians

Christians only in name, but *Gentiles* in worship and practice, who profaned it with heathenish superstition and idolatry : *and they shall tread under foot the holy city*, they shall trample upon, and tyrannize over the church of Christ, for the space of *forty and two months*.

At the same time God should raise up some true and faithful *witnesses* (ver. 3.) to preach and protest against these innovations and corruptions of religion; for there were protestants long before ever the name came into use. Of these witnesses there should be, tho' but a small, yet a competent number; and it was a sufficient reason for making them *two witnesses*, because that is the number required by the law, and approved by the gospel, (Deut. xix. 15. Mat. xviii. 16.) *In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established*: and upon former occasions two have often been joined in commission, as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, Elijah and Elisha in the apostacy of the ten tribes, and Zerubbabel and Jeshua after the Babylonish captivity, to whom these witnesses are particularly compared. Our Saviour himself sent forth his disciples (Luke x. 1.) *two and two*: and it hath been observed also, that the principal reformers have usually appeared as it were in pairs, as the Waldenses and Albigenses, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley, and their followers. Not that I conceive, that any two particular men, or two particular churches, were intended by this prophecy; but only it was meant in the general, that there should be some in every age, tho' but few in number, who should bear witness to the truth, and declare against the iniquity and idolatry of their times.

They should not be discouraged even by persecution and oppression, but tho' *clothed in sackcloth*, and living in a mourning and afflicted state, should yet *prophecy*, should yet preach the sincere word of God, and denounce the divine judgments against the reigning idolatry and wickedness: and this they should continue to do, as long as the grand corruption itself lasted, for the space of *a thousand two hundred and*

and threescore days. It is the same space of time with *the forty and two months* before mentioned. For *forty and two months*, consisting each of thirty days, are equal to *a thousand two hundred and threescore days*, or *years* in the prophetic stile: and *a thousand two hundred and threescore years*, as we have seen before in Daniel, and shall see hereafter in the Revelation, is the period assigned for the tyranny and idolatry of the church of Rome.

A character is then given of these witnesses, and of the power and effect of their preaching. *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth,* (ver. 4.) that is, they are like Zerubbabel and Jeshua, (Zech. iv.) the great instructors and inlightners of the church. *Fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies,* (ver. 5.) that is, they are like unto Moses and Elijah, (Num. xvi. 2 Kings i.) who called for fire upon their adversaries. But their fire was real, this is symbolical, and *proceedeth out of the mouth* of the witnesses, denouncing the divine vengeance on the corrupters and opposers of true religion; much in the same manner, as it was said to Jeremiah (v. 14.) *I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.* *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy,* (ver. 6.) that is, they are like Elijah, who foretold the want of rain in the days of Ahab, (1 Kings xvii. 1. Jam. v. 17.) *and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months*, which, mystically understood, is the same space of time as *the forty and two months*, and *the thousand two hundred and threescore days*, which are allotted for the prophesying of the witnesses. During this time the divine grace, and protection, and blessing shall be withheld from those men, who neglect and despise their preaching and doctrine. *They have also power over the waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will*, that is they are like Moses and Aaron, who inflicted these plagues on Egypt:

Egypt: and they may be said to *smite the earth with the plagues* which they denounce, for in scripture-language the prophets are often said to do those things, which they declare and foretel. But it is most highly probable, that these particulars will receive a more literal accomplishment, when the plagues of God and the vials of his wrath (Chap. xvi.) shall be poured out upon men, in consequence of their having so long resisted the testimony of the witnesses. Their cause and the cause of truth will finally be avenged on all their enemies.

Next after this description of the power and office of the witnesses, follows a prediction of these things, which shall befall them at the latter end of their ministry: and their passion, and death and resurrection, and ascension are copied from our Saviour's who is emphatically stiled (iii. 14.) *the faithful and true witness*; but with this difference, that his were real, theirs are figurative and mystical. *And when they shall have finished, when they shall be about finishing their testimony*, (ver. 7.) *the beast that ascendeth out of the abyss*, the tyrannical power of Rome, of which we shall hear no more hereafter, *shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them*. The beast indeed *shall make war against them* all the time that they are performing their ministry; but *when they shall be near finishing it, he shall so make war against them, as to overcome them, and kill them*. They shall be subdued and suppressed, be degraded from all power and authority, be deprived of all offices and functions, and be politically dead, if not naturally so. In this low and abject state they shall lie some time (ver. 8.) *in the street of the great city*, in some conspicuous place within the jurisdiction of * Rome, which

* Mr. Mann, the late learned Master of the Charter-house, in some manuscript notes upon Vitringa's book on the Revelation, communicated to me by my friend Dr. Jortin, hath the following to prove that not Jerusalem, but Rome was intended in this place. Rev. xi. 8. *The great city which spiritually is called*

which spiritually is called Sodom for corruption of manners, and Egypt for tyranny and oppression of the people of God, where also our Lord was crucified ^{spiritually,}

called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. 1.

“Jerusalem in ver. 2. of this very chapter, is called the holy city: can it be in so few periods intended under the names of Sodom and Egypt?”

2. “The holy city or Jerusalem ver. 2. was to be wasted and trod under foot by the Gentiles for 42 months: the two witnesses were to prophesy the same space of time: how then should their carcases lie in the street of Jerusalem so wasted?”

3. “Jerusalem in this book is four times called the Holy City, never the Great (unless it be here meant) The great City is twelve times repeated only of Babylon, i. e. Rome: is it probable it should be here used of Jerusalem?”

4. “In ver. 13. at the revival of the two witnesses after lying dead three days and a half, the tenth part of the city fell: but in ver. 2. Jerusalem is already wasted, and not supposed to be rebuilt; and therefore incapable of being so damaged.

5. “And were Jerusalem rebuilt, the enemies of Christ out of all people, tongues, and nations (ver. 9.) would not assemble there, nor the beast expose the slain witnesses but in his own capital.

1. “Object. There are two characteristics assigned which fit Jerusalem only, That it is spiritually or figuratively called Sodom and Egypt; as Jerusalem is compared to Sodom, Isa. i. 10. and iii. 9. (of Egypt no instance.)

1. “Answ. That Capernaum (Matt. xi. 23, 24.) is likewise compared to Sodom by Christ; and so is any city that shall reject the Gospel. Matt. x. 15. Whence Tertullian (adv. Jud. c. 9.) observes of this very name, Nec hoc novum Scripturis divinis, figurate uti translatione nominum, ex comparatione criminum. So Rome might be called Sodom for lewdness, and Egypt for the oppression of God’s people

2. “Object. The second characteristic, where also our Lord was crucified, determines the place to Jerusalem beyond all possibility of doubting.

2. “Answ. Mills says, The text should be read, where their Lord was crucified, or had been crucified; yet indeed without making any great difference to the literal sense. But why may not this expression be used figuratively as well as the preceding? why may not the Lord of the two witnesses be spiritually crucified, where they are spiritually slain? St. Paul to the Galatians uses this expression figuratively 3 or

4 times:

ally, being crucified afresh in the sufferings of his faithful martyrs. Nay to shew the greater indignity and cruelty to the martyrs, *their dead bodies* shall not be publicly exposed, (ver. 9.) but they shall be denied even the common privilege of burial: and their enemies *shall rejoice* and *insult over them*, (ver. 10.) and *shall send* mutual presents and congratulations *one to another*, for their deliverance from these tormentors, whose life and doctrine were a continual reproach to them. But *after three days and a half*, (ver. 11.) that is in the prophetic stile *after three years and a half*, for no less time is requisite for all these transactions, they shall be raised again by *the spirit of God*, and (ver. 12.) *shall ascend up to heaven*; they shall not only be restored to their pristine state, but shall be farther promoted to dignity and honor; and that by *a great voice from heaven*, by the voice of public authority. *At the same hour there shall be a great earthquake*, there shall be great commotions in the world; *and the tenth part of the city shall fall*, as an omen and earnest of a still greater fall; *and seven thousand names of men*, or seven thousand men of name, *shall be slain*; and the remainder in their fright and fear shall acknowledge the great power of God.

Some interpreters are of opinion, that this prophecy of *the death and resurrection of the witnesses* received its completion * in the case of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who were *two faithful witnesses* and martyrs of the blessed Jesus. It is very well known, that they were condemned to death, and afterwards burnt for

4 times: The Ep. to the Hebr. vi. 6. uses it figuratively, and perhaps in the very sense it may bear here. Tho' it is capable too of another, which is authorized by Christ himself, for Matth. x. and xxv. and Acts ix. 4, 5. he declares himself to suffer, what is done to his followers. In that great City therefore, which was drunk with the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus, Chap. xvii. 6. Jesus himself might be said to be crucified."

* Fox & Vitring. p. 487, &c. Vide etiam Fred. Spanhemii Hist. Christ. Sæc. xv. Cap. 6, 7. Histoire du Concile de Constance par Jaques Lenfant. Voltaire's General History and State of Europe. Part 2. and Annals of the Empire. Vol. 2.

for heresy by the council of Constance. Which council sitting about *three years and a half*, from November 1414 to April 1418, their *bodies* may that time be said to have lain *unburied in the street of the great city*, in Constance where was the greatest assembly not only of bishops and cardinals, but likewise of ambassadors, barons, counts, dukes, princes, and the emperor himself. But after the council was dissolved, these two preachers were restored as it were to life in their disciples and followers, who propagated the same doctrines, and maintained them by force of arms, and vanquished the Imperialists in several battles. It was truly said to them *Come up hither*, when they were invited to the council of Basil with a promise of redress of grievances: but the council having dealt fraudulently with them, they broke out again into open rebellion, *and the tenth part of the city fell*, the kingdom of Bohemia revolted, and fell alike from its obedience to the pope and emperor.

Others refer this prophecy to * the protestants of the league of Smalcald, who were entirely routed by the emperor Charles V. in the battle of Mulburg on the 24th of April 1547; when the two great champions of the protestants, John Frederic, elector of Saxony, was taken prisoner, and the Landgrave of Hesse was forced to surrender himself, and to beg pardon of the emperor. Protestantism was then in a manner suppressed, and the mass restored. The witnesses were *dead, but not buried*; and the papists rejoiced over them, *and made merry, and sent gifts one to another*. But this joy and triumph of theirs were of no very long continuance; for in the space of about *three years and a half*, the protestants were *raised again* at Magdeburg, and defeated and took the duke of Mecklenburg prisoner in December 1550. From that time their affairs changed for the better almost every day; success attended their arms and coun-

fels;

* Brightman and Vitring p. 493, &c. See also Sleidan's Hist. of the Reformation, B. 19, &c. Voltaire's Annals of the Empire. Vol. 2.

fels; and the emperor was obliged by the treaty of Passau to allow them the free exercise of their religion, and to re-admit them into the imperial chamber, from which they had ever since the victory of Mulburg been excluded. Here was indeed *a great earthquake*, a great commotion, in which many *thousands were slain*; and *the tenth part of the city fell*, a great part of the German empire renounced the authority, and abandoned the communion of the church of Rome.

Some again may think this prophecy very applicable to * the horrid massacre of the protestants at Paris, and in other cities of France, begun on the memorable eve of St. Bartholomew's day 1572. According to the best authors, there were slain thirty or forty thousand hugonots in a few days; and among them without doubt many true witnesses and faithful martyrs of Jesus Christ. *Their dead bodies lay in the street of the great city*, one of the greatest cities of Europe; for they were not suffered to be buried being the bodies of heretics; but were dragged thro' the street, or thrown into the river, or hung upon gibbets, and exposed to public infamy. Great *rejoicings* too were made in the courts of France, Rome, and Spain; they went in procession to the churches, they returned public thanks to God, they sung Te Deums, they celebrated jubilees, they struck medals; and it was enacted that St. Bartholomew's day should ever afterwards be kept with double pomp and solemnity. But neither was this joy of long continuance; for in little more than *three years and a half*, Henry III, who succeeded his brother Charles IX, entered into a treaty with the hugonots, which was concluded and published on the 24th of May 1576, whereby all the former sentences against them were reversed, and the free and open exercise of their religion was granted to them; they were to be admitted to all honors, dignities, and offices, as well as the papists; and the judges were to be half of the one religion, and half of the other; with

* Vitring p: 496, &c. Thuani Hist. Lib. 52, 53, & 62. Davila's Hist. B. 5 and 6. Mezeray, Charles IX. and Henry III.

with other articles greatly to their advantage, which were in a manner the *resurrection* of the witnesses, and their *ascension into heaven*. The *great earthquake*, and the *falling of the tenth part of the city*, and the *slaying of thousands of men*, according to this hypothesis, must be referred to the great commotions and civil wars, which for several years afterwards cruelly disturbed, and almost destroyed the kingdom of France.

Others again have recourse to later events, and the later indeed the better and fitter for the purpose. Peter Jerieu, a famous divine of the French church at Rotterdam, * imagined that the persecution then carried on by Lewis XIV. against the protestant of France, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes in October 1685, would be the last persecutions of the church; that during this time the witnesses would lie dead, but should recover and revive within a few years, and the Reformation should be established in that kingdom by royal authority; the whole country should renounce popery, and embrace the protestant religion, Bishop Lloyd and after him Mr. Whiston † apply this prophecy to the poor protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, who by a cruel edict of their sovran the Duke of Savoy, instigated by the French king, were imprisoned and murdered, or banished and totally dissipated at the latter end of the year 1686. They were kindly received and succored by the protestant states; and after a while secretly entering Savoy with their swords in their hands, they regained their ancient possessions with great slaughter of their enemies; and the Duke himself, having then left the French interest, granted them a full pardon; and re-established them by another edict signed June 4, 1690, just *three years and a half* after their total dissipation. These were indeed most barbarous persecutions of the protestants both in France and Savoy; and at the same time popery here in England was advanced to the throne and threat-

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* Jurieu's Accomplishment of the Prophecies. Part 2. Chap. 12 and 13.

† Whiston's Essay on the Rev. Part. 3. Vision 2.

ened an utter subversion of our religion and liberties, but in little more than *three years and a half* a happy deliverance was wrought by the glorious Revolution.

In all these cases there may be some resemblance to the prophecy before us, of *the death and resurrection of the witnesses*; and it may please an overruling providence so to dispose and order events, that the calamities and afflictions of the church may in some measure run parallel one to another, and all the former efforts of that tyrannical and persecuting power, called *the beast*, may be the types and figures as it were of this his last and greatest effort against the witnesses. But tho' these instances sufficiently answer in some respects, yet they are deficient in others, and particularly in this, that they are none of them the last persecution; others have been since, and in all probability will be again. Besides as *the two witnesses* are designed to be the representatives of the protestants in general, so the persecution must be general too, and not confined to this or that particular church or nation. We are now living under *the sixth trumpet*: and the empire of the *Euphratean horsemen* or Othmans is still subsisting, and perhaps in as large extent as ever; *the beast* is still reigning; and *the witnesses* are still, in some times and places more, in some less, *prophesying in sackcloth*. It will not be till toward *the end of their testimony*, and that *end* seemeth to be yet at some distance, that the great victory and triumph of the *beast*, and the suppression, resurrection, and exaltation of *the witnesses* will take effect. When all these things shall be accomplished, then *the sixth trumpet* will end, then *the second woe*, shall be *past*, (ver. 14.) the Othman empire shall be broken in the same manner that Ezekiel (xxxviii. xxxix.) and Daniel (xi. 44, 45.) have predicted; the suffering of *the witnesses* shall cease, and they shall be raised and exalted above their enemies: and when *the second woe* shall be thus *past*, behold *the third woe*, or the total destruction of the *beast*, cometh quickly. Some time intervened between *the first* and *the second woes*; but upon the ceasing of *the second* *the third* shall commence immediately.

It appears then that the greater part of this prophecy relating to *the witnesses* remains yet to be fulfilled : but possibly some may question, whether any part of it hath been fulfilled ; whether there have been any such persons as *the witnesses*, any true and faithful servants of Jesus Christ, who have in every age professed doctrines contrary to those maintained by the pope and church of Rome. The truth of the fact will best appear by an historical deduction ; and if it can be proved that there have constantly been such *witnesses* from the seventh century down to the Reformation, during the most flourishing period of popery, I presume there can be little doubt about the times preceding or following. As there hath been occasion to observe before, the seeds of popery were sown even in the apostles time, but they were not grown up to maturity, the power of the pope as a *born* or temporal prince was not established till the eight century ; and from thence therefore it will be proper to begin our deduction, when the beast began to reign, and the witnesses to *prophecy in sackcloth*.

Great as the power of the latin church was grown in the eighth century, the Greek church still dissented from it, and opposed it. The emperors * Leo Isauricus and his son Constantine Copronymus not only vigorously opposed the worship of images, but also denied the intercession of saints, and burnt and destroyed their relics. In the year 754 Constantine Copronymus held a general council at Constantinople of 338 bishops, who prohibited unanimously the worship of saints as well as of images ; and † declared that “ only one image was constituted by Christ himself, namely the bread and wine in the eucharist, which represent the body and blood of Christ : ” than which there cannot be a stronger declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation as well as against the worship of ima-
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* Theoph. Cedren. Zonar. &c. &c. Fred. Spanhemii. Hist. Christian. Sec. viii. Cap. 6, 7, &c.

† Ex Concil. Constantinop. Tom. 3. p. 359. Edit. Binnii. Usserius de Christian. Eccles. successionem et statu. Cap. 2. Sect.

ges. It is true that the second council of Nice in the year 787 restored and established the worship of images, and the pope ratified and confirmed it; but nevertheless great opposition was made to it by several churches in the west. Charlemain * held a council at Francfort in the year 794, consisting of 300 bishops of various nations, who condemned equally the second council of Nice and the worship of images. The Carolin books were also set forth under the name and authority of that great monarch; and the doctrines therein contained, of the sufficiency of the scriptures, of the worship of God alone, of prayers in the vulgar tongue, of the eucharist, of justification, of repentance, of pretended visions and miracles, and various other points, are such as a papist would abhor, and a protestant would subscribe. Not to seek for farther instances, the † British churches lamented and execrated the second council of Nice; and the famous Albin or Alcuin wrote a letter against it, disproving and refuting it by express authorities of holy scripture; which letter was transmitted to Charles the great in the name of the bishops and other great men of the kingdom. Even in Italy ‡ the council of Forojulio prescribed the use of no other creed but that of the apostles, so that they had no conception of the necessity of so many additional articles, as have since been made by pope Pius IV. and received by the church. Some even of the Italian bishops assisted at the council of Francfort before mentioned, and particularly Paulinius bishop of Aquileia bore a principal part in it.

Popery prevailed still more in the *ninth* century, but yet not without considerable opposition. Not
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* Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 6 and 9. Uffer. *ibid.* p. 20. Allix's Remarks upon the ancient churches of the Albigenses, Chap. 8.

† Hoveden, *Annal. pars prior.* p. 232. Simeon Dunelm. *Hist.* p. 111. Matt. Westm. Flores *Hist. Ann.* 793. Uffer. *ibid.* p. 19, 20. Collier's *Eccles. Hist.* B. 2. p. 139.

‡ Tom. 7. *Concil.* 1002. Allix's remarks upon the ancient churches of Piedmont. Chap. 8. Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 9, 10.

only * the emperors of the east, Nicephorus, Leo Armenius, Michael Balbus, Theophilus, and the emperors of the west, Charles the great, and Lewis the pious, but also several prelates and ecclesiastics, opposed the absolute power and supremacy of the pope, together with the worship of images, and invocation of saints and angels. The capitularies and edicts of Charles the great and Lewis the pious † enjoined the reading of the canonical scripture as the sole rule of faith, without any regard to human traditions or apocryphal writings. Private masses and pilgrimages, and other such superstitions ‡ were forbidden by the same capitularies. Lewis the pious held a council at Paris in the year 824, which § agreed with the council of Frankfurt in rejecting the second council of Nice, and forbidding the worship of images. Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, in his book against pictures and images, maintains, that we ought not to adore any image of God, but only that which is God himself, even his eternal Son; and that there is no other mediator between God and men, save Jesus Christ God and man: so that it is no wonder that this book is condemned in the Index Epurgatorius of the church of Rome. It was in this century, that the doctrine of transubstantiation was first advanced here in the west by Paschasius Radbertus abbat of Corbie in France; but it was strenuously opposed by Rabanus Maurus, Bertramus, Johannes Scotus, and many other bishops and learned men of that age. Rabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mentz ||, passes this censure upon the novelty of the doctrine; “Some, says he, of late not rightly conceiving concerning the sacrament of the body and blood

* Fred. Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. ix. Cap. 9. Miscell. Sacræ. Antiq. Lib. 6. Hist. Imag. Sect. 7, 8, 9.

† Capit. Aquisgranens. Spanhem. Hist. Christian. Sæc. ix. Cap. 3. Sect. 2. cap. 9. Sect. 2.

‡ Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 9. Sect. 5, 8, &c.

§ Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 9. Sect. 3. Cap. 12. Sect. 2. Hist. Imag. Sect. 9. Allix's Remarks upon the ancient churches of the Albigenes. Chap. 9.

|| Lib. Pænitent. Cap. 33. Spanhem. Hist. Christian. Sæc. ap. 10. Sect. 4.

blood of our Lord, have affirmed that this is the very same body of our Lord, which was born of the Virgin Mary, and in which our Lord himself suffered, &c. which error we have opposed to the utmost of our power, &c." He thus * expresses his own sentiments; "Our Lord would have the sacrament of his body and blood be taken and eaten by the faithful, that by a visible work an invisible effect might appear. For as the material food outwardly nourishes and refreshes the body, so also the word of God inwardly nourishes and strengthens the soul." Again: "the sacrament is reduced into the nourishment of the body, but by the virtue of the sacrament eternal life is obtained." Bertramus, or Ratramnus as he is otherwise called, a monk of Corbie, wrote a book of *the body and blood of our Lord*, which he inscribed to the emperor Charles the bald. The emperor † had inquired of him, "whether the same body, which was born of Mary, and suffered, and was dead and buried, and which sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is what is daily taken in the mouth of the faithful by the mystery of the sacrament in the church:" and Bertram answers, that the difference between them is "as great as between the pledge, and the thing for which the pledge is delivered; as great as between the image, and the thing whose image it is; as great as between the representation, and the reality." He says in several places, that "the bread and wine are figuratively the body of Christ, spiritually not corporally, in figure, in image, in mystery, not in truth, or real existence, or presence of the substance." Johannes Scotus, the famous Irishman, for the Irish were the Scots of those times, ‡ wrote also a book of *the eucharist* by the command of Charles the bald: and therein he

* Institut. Cleric. Lib. 1. Cap. 31. & de Universo Lib. 5. Cap. 11. Uffer de Christian. Eccles. successionē & statu. Cap. 2. Sect. 16.

† Uffer. ibid. Sect. 17.

‡ Spanhem. ibid. Uffer. ibid. Sect. 19. Dupin. ix. Siecle. Chap. 7. Cave Hist. Litt. Ann. 858. p. 45. Vol. 2. Collier's Ecclesiast. Hist. B. 3. p. 165.

asserted, that "the sacrament of the altar is not the true body, nor true blood of our Lord, but only the memorial of the true body and of the true blood." He was after this invited into England by King Alfred, was preferred by him, and honoured with the title of martyr after his death; which is at least a strong presumption, that the church of England had not at that time received the doctrine of transubstantiation. In Italy itself * Angilbertus, archbishop of Milan, would not acknowledge the supremacy of the pope, nor did the church of Milan submit to the see of Rome till two hundred years afterwards. But no one was more willing, as indeed no one of that age was more able to stem the torrent of superstition than Claude bishop of Turin, in his numerous writings and comments upon scripture. He † asserted the equality of all the apostles with St. Peter, and maintained that Jesus Christ was the only head of the church. He overthrew the doctrine of merit and all pretences to works of supererogation. He rejected traditions in matters of religion, held the church to be subject to error, and denied the use of prayers for the dead. He proposed the doctrine of the eucharist in a manner totally different from Paschasius Radbertus, and entirely conformable to the sense of the antient church. He opposed with all his might the worship of saints, of relics, of images, together with pilgrimages, penances, and other superstitions of the like kind. He may in a manner be said to have sown the seeds of the reformation in his diocese of Turin; and his doctrines took such deep root especially in the valleys of Piedmont, that they continued to flourish there for some centuries, as the papists themselves acknowledge.

The *tenth* century even the writers of the Romish communion lament and describe as the most debauched and wicked, the most illiterate and ignorant age since the

* Sigon. de Regn. Ital. Lib. 5. Ann. 844. Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 9. Sect. 1.

† See these points proved by quotations and extracts from his works in Dr. Allix's remarks upon the ancient churches of Piedmont. Chap. 9. See also Spanheim. Dupin. Cave, &c.

the coming of Christ. Genebrard * says, " This is called the unhappy age, being destitute of men famous for wit and learning, as also of famous princes and popes ; in which scarce any thing was done worthy of the memory of posterity." He subjoins, " But chiefly unhappy in this one thing, that for almost 150 years about 50 popes totally degenerated from the virtue of their ancestors, being more like apostates than apostles." Baronius himself † denominates it an *iron*, a *lead*, and *obscure* age : and declares that " Christ was then, as it appears, in a very deep sleep, when the ship was covered with waves ; and what seemed worse, when the Lord was thus asleep, there were wanting disciples who by their cries might awaken him, being themselves all fast asleep." It is not to be wondered that in so long and dark a night as this, while all were asleep, the subtle enemy should sow his tares in great abundance. However there were some few like *lights shining in a dark place*, who remonstrated against the degeneracy and superstition of the times. The resolutions and decrees of the councils of Francfort and Paris against the worship of images ‡ had still some force and influence in Germany, in France, in England, and other countries. In the former part of this century, in the year 909, a council § was held at Trosly, a village near Soissons in France : and having made several wise and good regulations, they concluded with the profession of the things, which Christians ought to believe and practise : and in that profession are none of these things which constitute the sum of popish doctrine, nothing of the pope's being head of the church, nothing of the daily sacrifice of the mass, or of purgatory, or of the worship of crea-

* Genebrard, Chron. Lib 4. In initio X Sæc. Usser. de Christian. Eccles. successionem & statu. cap. 2. Sect. 34. Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. x. Cap. Sect. 1.

† Baron. ad ann. 900. Ibid. ad ann. 912. Usser. ibid. Spanhem. ibid.

‡ Spanhem. ibid. cap. 6. Sect. 8. Hist. Imag. Sect. 9.

§ Tom. 3. Concil. Gallix. Spanhem. ibid. cap. 8. Sect. 3. Dupin. x. Siecle. chap. 3.

tures, or of commentitious sacraments, or of confession to the priest, but of pure and sincere confession to God: so much did this council differ from the spirit and principles of the council of Trent. Many churches * still retained the use of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue: and in England particularly Athelstan caused them to be translated into the Anglo-Saxon idiom. Great opposition † was also made in several countries to the celibacy of the clergy; and several councils were held upon the controversy between the monks and the secular clergy, and particularly in England, where Elfere earl of Mercia expelled the monks out of the monasteries in that province, and introduced the clergy with their wives. Many too even in this age denied the doctrine of transubstantiation. Heriger abbat of Lobes near Liege ‡ wrote expressly against it; as did also § Alfric in England, whose homily for easter used to be read publicly in the churches. His principal aim therein ¶ is to prove, “that we spiritually taste the body of Christ, and drink his blood, when with true faith we partake of that holy sacrament; the bread and wine cannot by any benediction be changed into the body and blood of Christ, they are indeed the body and blood of Christ, yet not corporally, but spiritually;” with much more to the same purpose. He wrote also two epistles, the one addressed to Wulfin bishop of Shirburn, and the other to Wulstan archbishop of York, wherein he asserts the same doctrine. In the former he thus || explains the doctrine

* Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 6. Sect. 2 & 10. *Scripturas divinas verti fecit in Anglo-Saxonicum idioma.* Wilh. Malmes. & Balæus.

† Spanhem. *ibid.* Sect. 5. *Spelmanni Concil. Brit. Vol. 1. Collier's Eccles. Hist. B. 3. p. 109.*

‡ Sigebert de *Ecclesiast. Script.* cap. 138. Uffer. *ibid.* Sect. 20. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 7. Sect. 3. Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 4.

§ Uffer. *ibid.* Sect. 20, 21. Spanhem. *ibid.* Sect. 2. Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 5. Cave. *Hist. Litt. Vol. 2. p. 108, &c.* Collier's *Ecclesiast. Hist. B. 3. p. 204, &c.*

¶ Cave *ibid.* p. 110.

|| Apud. Uffer. *ibid.* Sect. 21.

doctrin of the sacrament ; “ The host is the body of Christ, not corporally, but spiritually. Not the body in which he suffered ; but the body of which he spake, when he consecrated the bread and wine the night preceding his passion, and said of the consecrated bread, This is my body, and again of the consecrated wine, This is my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” In the latter he hath these * memorable words, which some papist of more zeal than knowledge attempted to erase out of the manuscript copy. “ Yet this sacrifice is not made his body in which he suffered for us, nor his blood which he poured out for us, but it is spiritually made his body and blood ; as the manna which rained from heaven, and the water which flowed from the rock, as Paul the apostle saith.” The synods and councils, which were held in this age by the authority of kings and bishops, shew evidently that the power of the pope had not yet extended over all. Nay there were kings and bishops who opposed the supremacy of the pope ; and none more than † the council of Rheims in the year 991, and Gerbert archbishop of Rheims, who declared “ that if the pope did amiss, he was liable to the censures of the church :” And speaking of the pope then reigning John XV. “ What, says he, do you conceive this man, sitting on a lofty throne, glittering in purple clothing and in gold, what, I say, do you conceive him to be ? If he is destitute of charity, and is puffed up by knowledge alone, he is Antichrist sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God.” He was afterwards himself chosen pope under the name of Sylvester II. and possibly the change of his situation might produce a change in his sentiments.

Much of the same complexion with the tenth was the *eleventh* century, equally sunk in profligacy, superstition, and ignorance, but yet not without some superior

* Apud Usser. *ibid* & Cave. *ibid*.

† Spanhem. ex Baronio ad ann. 992. Num. 10. &c. et ex Epist. Gerberti. Cap. 6. Sect. 3, &c. Dupin. *ibid*. Chap. 5. See also Allix's remarks upon the antient churches of the Albigenes. Chap. 10.

superior spirits to bear testimony against it. The papal power was in this century carried beyond all bounds by the ambition and arrogance of the reigning popes, and particularly by the violence and haughtiness of Gregory VII. whose former name was Hildebrand, or *Hell-brand*, as he hath often been denominated. But yet there were emperors and councils, who strenuously opposed the pretensions and usurpations of the see of Rome; and these contests and struggles between the popes and emperors about the right of investitures and other articles make a principal part of the history of this age. Our English kings, devoted as they were to the religion, yet would not entirely submit to the authority of the bishop of Rome; but contradicted it in several instances. When William I. was required by the pope to pay him homage, he made * answer, 'To pay homage I have been unwilling, nor am I willing; for neither did I promise it, neither do I find that my predecessors paid it to your predecessors.' His son William Rufus exerted somewhat of the same spirit, and † insisted that the pope, without his permission, had no manner of jurisdiction in England. Early in this century, there ‡ appeared at Orleans some heretics as they were called, who maintained that the consecration of the priest could not change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and that it was unprofitable to pray to saints and angels; and they were condemned by the council of Orleans in the year 1017. Not long after these § appeared other heretics of the same stamp in Flanders, who were also condemned by the synod of Arras in the year 1025. They came
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* Apud Baron. Ann. 1079. Sect. 25. Uffer. de Christian. Eccles. successionem et statu. Cap. 7. Sect. 9.

† Eadmer. Hist. Lib. 2. Collier's Eccles. Hist. B. 4 p. 279.

‡ Dupin XI. Siecle. Chap. 13. Fred. Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. XI. Cap. 10. Sect. 1.

§ Spanhem. ibid. Dupin. ibid. Allix's remarks upon the ancient church of Piedmont. Chap. 11.

originally from Italy, where they had been the disciples of Gundulphus; and they are said to have admitted no scripture but the gospels and apostolical writings; to have denied the reality of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist; to have attributed no religious worship to the holy confessors, none to the cross, none to images, nor to temples nor altars; and to have asserted, that there was no purgatory, and that penances after death could not absolve the deceased from their sins. Other tenets were ascribed to them, which were really heretical: and perhaps they might hold some errors, as well as some truths; or perhaps their adversaries, as it hath been their usual artifice, might lay things to their charge merely to blacken and defame them. Not long after these * arose the famous Berengarius, a native of Tours, and archdeacon of Angers, who more professedly wrote against the doctrine of transubstantiation; and also † called 'the church of Rome a church of malignants, the council of vanity, and the seat of Satan.' It is true that he was compelled by the authority of popes and councils to renounce, abjure, and burn his writings. But his was all a forced, and not in the least a voluntary recantation. As often as he recanted, he relapsed again. He returned like a dog to his vomit, as a § contemporary popish writer expresseth it. He lived and died in the same sentiments. His heresy was from him called the Berengarian heresy; and his followers were so numerous, that as † old historians relate, he had corrupted almost all the French, Italians, and English with his depravities. When Gregory VII. had, both by letters and by a council held at

* Usser. *ibid.* Cap. 7. Sect. 24. &c. Dupin. *ibid.* Chap. 2. Spanhem. *ibid.* Cap. 8. &c. &c.

† Gulielm. Riginald. *Calvino Turcism.* Lib. 2. Cap. 5. Usser. *ibid.* Sect. 24.

§ Bertoldus Constantiensis presbyter apud Usser. *ibid.* Sect. 34.

† Matt. Westmonast. & Hist. Roffen. in anno 1087. Usser. *ibid.* Sect. 27.

at Rome in the year 1074, strictly forbidden the marriage of the clergy, it raised * great commotions among the ecclesiastics in Germany; who not only complained of the pope for imposing this yoke, but likewise accused him of advancing a notion insupportable, and contrary to the words of our Saviour, who saith that all are not able to live in continence, and to the words of the apostle, who ordered those who have not the gift of continence to marry. They added that this law, in forcing the ordinary course of nature, would be the cause of great disorders; that they would rather renounce the priesthood than marriage; and the pope should provide, if he could, angels to govern the church, since he refused to be served by men. This was the language of these corrupt ecclesiastics, as † Dupin hath called them: but the decree of the pope was no less opposed in France, in Flanders, in Italy, and England, than in Germany. A council was held at Winchester in the year 1076, wherein it was ‡ decreed indeed, that no canon should marry; but the priests in the country, who were already married, were allowed to cohabit with their wives, whereas the pope had enjoined all priests without distinction to put away their wives, or to forbear the exercise of their office. Whereupon Mr. Collier hath made this just reflection; “From hence it appears that the papal supremacy had not reached its zenith in this century, and that the English bishops did not believe the patriarchal power arbitrary and unlimited, but that a national church had some reserves of liberty, and might dissent from the constitutions of the see of Rome upon occasion.”

Europe hitherto was involved in the dark night of popery, with only some stars appearing here and there in the horizon; but in the *twelfth* century there began to be visible some streaks of the morning light,
some

* Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 5. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 7. Sect. 4.

† C'est ainsi que ces ecclesiastiques corrompus parloient. Dupin. *ibid.* p. 36.

‡ Collier's *Ecclesiast. Hist.* B. 4. p. 248, 249. Spelman's *Concil.* Vol. 2.

some dawnings of a reformation. Here in England, during the reign of Henry II. the famous constitutions of Clarendon were sworn to and signed both by the clergy and the laity, in recognition of the rights of the crown, particularly forbidding all appeals to Rome without the king's licence, and appointing the trial of criminal clerks before secular judges: But the best account of this as well as of the other memorable transactions of this reign the public expects with some impatience from one of the most masterly and elegant writers of the present age, a friend to religion and virtue, a friend to liberty and his country. Fluentius bishop of Florence * taught publicly, that Antichrist was born, and come into the world: whereupon pope Paschal II. went to Florence, held a council there in the year 1105, and severely reprimanded the bishop, and strictly forbade him to preach any such doctrine. St. Bernard himself, devoted as he was and bigotted to the church of Rome in other respects, † yet inveighed loudly against the corruption of the clergy, and the pride and tyranny of the popes, saying that they were the ministers of Christ and served Antichrist, that nothing remained but that the man of sin should be revealed, that the beast in the Apocalyps occupied St. Peter's chair, with other expressions to the same effect. While our King Richard I. was at Messina in Sicily, going upon his expedition to the holy land, ‡ sent for the famous abbat Joachim of Calabria, and heard him with much satisfaction explain the Apocalyps, and discourse of Antichrist. He said that Antichrist was already born in the city of Rome, and that he would be advanced to the apostolical chair, and *exalted above all that is called God*

* Platina in vita Paschal. II. Spenhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. XII. cap. 5. Sect. 2. Cave Hist. Litt. Sæc. XII. Concilia. Vol. 2. p. 258. Calmet. Dict. in ANTICHRIST.

† Spanhem. ibid. Uffer de Christian Eccles. successionem & statu. cap. 7. Sect. 5. 6.

‡ Rogeri de Hoveden Annal. Pars Posterior p. 681. Edit. Froicof. 1601. &c. Collier's Eccles. Hist. B. 6. p. 401.

God or is worshipped. So that some true notion of Antichrist began to spread even among the members of the church of Rome; and no wonder that it prevailed among those, who more directly opposed the doctrines of that church. Peter de Bruis and Henry his disciple * taught in several parts of France, that "the body and blood of Christ were not offered in the theatrical mass; that the doctrine of the change of the substances in the sacrament is false; that sacrifices, that is masses, prayers, alms, and other works of the living for the dead, are foolish and impious, and profit them nothing; that priests and monks ought rather to marry than to burn; that crosses are not to be adored, or venerated, and so many crosses, serving to superstition, ought rather to be removed than retained:" And they both were martyrs, the one being burnt, and the other imprisoned for life, on account of their doctrines. Other heresies were laid to their charge, and their own writings are not extant to speak for them; but these things they taught and professed, their enemies themselves being judges. Arnold of Brescia † held opinions contrary to those of the church concerning the sacrament, and preached mightily against the temporal power and jurisdiction of the pope and the clergy; for which he was burnt at Rome in the year 1155, and his ashes were thrown into the Tyber, to prevent the people from expressing any veneration for his relics. But the true witnesses, and as I may say the protestants of this age, were the Waldenses and Albigenes, who began to be famous at this time, and being dispersed in various places were distinguished by various appellations. Their first and proper name seemeth to have been

Vallenses,

* Hist. Eccles. Magdeburg. Vol. 3 Cent. XII. cap. 5 p. 331. &c. Edit. Basil. 1624. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 7. Sect. 2. Dupin XII Siecle. chap. 6. Allix's remarks upon the ancient churches of the Albigenes chap. 14.

† Otho Frising de Gestis Frederici. Lib. 1. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 7. Sect. 4. Dupin. *ibid.* Allix's remarks on the ancient church of Piedmont chap. 18.

Vallenses, or inhabitants of the valleys; and so sayeth * one of the oldest writers, Ebrard of Bethune who wrote in the year 1212; "They call themselves *Vallenses*, because they abide in the valley of tears," alluding to their situation in the valleys of Piedmont. They were called *Albigenses* from Alby a city in the southern parts of France, where also great numbers of them were situated. They were afterwards denominated *Valdenses* or *Waldenses* from Peter Valdo or Waldo a rich citizen of Lyons, and a considerable leader of the sect. From Lyons too they were called *Leonists*, and *Cathari* from the professed purity of their life and doctrine, as others since have had the name of *Puritans*. As there was a variety of names, so there might be some diversity of opinions among them; but that they were not guilty of Menicheism and other abominable heresies, which have been charged upon them, is certain and evident from all the remains of their creeds, confessions, and writings. Their opinions † are thus recited from an old manuscript by the Centuriators of Magdeburg.

‘ In articles of faith the authority of the holy scripture is the highest, and for that reason it is the rule of judging; so that whatsoever agreeth not with the word of God, is deservedly to be rejected and avoided.

‘ The decrees of fathers and councils are so far to be approved, as they agree with the word of God.

‘ The reading and knowledge of the holy scriptures is free and necessary for all men, the laity as well as the clergy; yea and the writings of the prophets and apostles are to be read rather than the comments of men.

‘ The sacraments of the church of Christ are two, baptism and the supper of the Lord.

‘ The

* Ebrard. Beth. Antihæres. cap. 25. Uffer. ibid. cap. 8. Sect. 4. Allix. ibid.

† Hæc ex antiquo manuscripto libro proferimus. Hist. eccles. Magdeburg. Vol. 3. cent. XII. cap. 8. p. 548, 49. Edit. Basil. 1624. See also the confession of the faith of the Waldenses in Perrin's Hist. B. 1. chap. 12. &c.

‘ The receiving in both kinds for priests and people was instituted by Christ.

‘ Masses are impious ; and it is madness to say masses for the dead.

‘ Purgatory is an invention of men ; for they who believe, go into eternal life, they who believe not, into eternal damnation.

‘ The invoking and worshipping of dead saints is idolatry.

‘ The church of Rome is the whore of Babylon.

‘ We must not obey the pope and bishops ; because they are the wolves of the church of Christ.

‘ The pope hath not the primacy over all the churches of Christ, neither hath he the power of both swords.

‘ That is the church of Christ which heareth the sincere word of Christ, and useth the sacraments instituted by him, in what place soever it exist.

‘ Vows of celibacy are inventions of men, and occasions of Sodomy.

‘ So many orders are so many characters of the beast.

‘ Monks are a stinking carcass.

‘ So many superstitious dedications of churches, commemorations of the dead, benedictions of creatures, pilgrimages, so many forced fastings, so many superfluous festivals, those perpetual bellowings (meaning the singing and chanting) of unlearned men, and the observations of the other ceremonies, manifestly hindering the teaching and learning of the word, are diabolical inventions.

‘ The marriage of priests is lawful and necessary.’

Much hath been written in censure and commendation of this sect both by enemies and friends, by papists and protestants. If they have been grossly misrepresented and villified on one side, they have been amply vindicated and justified on the other ; but I will only produce the testimonies of three witnesses concerning them, whom both sides must allow to be unexceptionable, Reinerius, Thuanus, and Mezeray.

zeray. Reinerius * florished about the year 1254 ; and his testimony is the more remarkable ; as he was a Dominican, and inquisitor general. “ Among all the sects, which still are or have been, there is not any more pernicious to the church than that of the Leonists. And this for three reasons. The first is because it is older ; for some say that it hath indured from the time of pope Sylvester ; others from the time of the apostles. The second, because it is more general ; for there is scarce any country wherein this sect is not. The third, because when all other sects beget horror in the hearers by the outrageousness of their blasphemies against God, this of the Leonists hath a great shew of piety ; because they live justly before men, and believe all things rightly concerning God, and all the articles which are contained in the creed ; only they blaspheme the church of Rome and the clergy ; whom the multitude of the laity is easy to believe.” The credit of Thuanus as an historian is too well established to need any recommendation ; and he is † so candid and impartial, as to distinguish between their real opinions, and those heresies which were falsely imputed to them by their enemies. “ Peter Valdo a wealthy citizen of Lyons about the year of Christ 1170 gave name to the Waldenses. He (as Guy de Perpignan, bishop of Elna in Roussillon, who exercised the office of inquisitor against the Waldenses, hath left testified in writing) leaving his house and goods, devoted himself wholly to the profession of the gospel, and took care to have the writings of the prophets and apostles translated into the vulgar tongue—When now in a little time he had many followers about him, he sent them forth as his disciples into all parts to propagate the gospel—Their fixed opinions

* Reiner. contra Hæret. cap. 4. p. 54. Edit. Ingolst. 1613. Usser. ibid. cap. 6. Sect. 11. cap. 8. Sect. 1. Cave Hist. Litt. Vol. 2. ad ann. 1254. p. 302. Usser hath added other remarkable testimonies concerning the morals of the Waldenses and their followers. Usser. cap. 6. Sect. 15.

† Thuani Hist. Lib. 6. Sect. 16. Vol. 1. p. 221. Edit. Buckley.

were said to be these: that the church of Rome, because she hath renounced the true faith of Christ, is the whore of Babylon, and that barren tree, which Christ himself hath cursed, and commanded to be rooted up; therefore we must by no means obey the pope, and the bishops who cherish his errors: that the monastic life is the sink of the church, and an hellish institution; its vows are vain, and subservient only to the filthy love of boys; the orders of the presbytery are the marks of the great beast, which is mentioned in the Apocalyp: the fire of purgatory, the sacrifice of the mass, the feasts of the dedications of churches, the worship of saints, and propitiations for the dead, are inventions of Satan. To these the principal and certain heads of their doctrine others were feigned and added, concerning marriage, the resurrection, the state of the soul after death, and concerning meats." Mezeray, the celebrated historiographer of France, is short, but full to our purpose; for * he saith, that "they had almost the same opinions as those who are now called Calvinists." It cannot be objected that this is protestant evidence, for they were all three members of the church of Rome.

In the *thirteenth* century the Waldenses and Albigenses had spread and prevailed so far, and were prevailing still farther, that the pope thought it necessary to exert his utmost efforts to suppress them. For this purpose the first croisade was proclaimed of Christians against Christians, and the office of inquisition was first erected, the one to subdue their bodies, the other to enslave their souls. It is enough to make the blood run cold, to read of the horrid murders and devastations of this time, how many of these poor innocent Christians were sacrificed to the blind fury and malice of their enemies. It is † computed that in France

* Abrege Chronol. Philippe Auguste. p. 657. Edit. Amsterdam 1674.

† Vide Mede in Apoc. p. 503.

France alone were slain a million : and what was the consequence of these shocking barbarities ? No writer can better inform us than * the wise and moderate historian Thuanus. “ Against the Waldenses (saith he) when exquisite punishments availed little, and the evil was exasperated by the remedy which had been unseasonably applied, and their number increased daily, at length complete armies were raised : and a war of no less weight, than what our people had before waged against the Saracens, was decreed against them : the event of which was, that they were rather slain, put to flight, spoiled every where of their goods and dignities, and dispersed here and there, than that convinced of their error they repented. So that they who at first had defended themselves by arms, at last overcome by arms fled into Provence and the neighbouring Alps of the French territory, and found a shelter for their life and doctrine in those places. Part withdrew into Calabria, and continued there a long while, even to the pontificate of Pius IV. Part passed into Germany, and fixed their abode among the Bohemians, and in Poland and Livonia. Others turning to the west obtained refuge in Britain.” But there were others in this age, who proceeded not so far as the Waldenses and Albigenes, and yet opposed the church of Rome in many respects. At the beginning of this century † Almeric and his disciples were charged with several heresies, and were condemned by the second council of Paris in the year 1209. They might possibly hold some heterodox opinions ; but their great offense was their denying the change of the substance of the bread and wine in the eucharist, their opposing the worship of saints images and relics, and their affirming that the pope was Antichrist : that Rome was Babylon, and that the prelates were the members and ministers of Antichrist : so that these

* Thuanus Prefat. ad Henric. iv. p. 7. Edit. Buckley.

† Dupin XIII. Siecle. chap. 8. Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sec. XIII. cap. 9. Sect. 2.

differed little from the Waldenses and Albigenses. William of St. Amour, a doctor of the Sorbonne, * wrote a treatise *of the perils of the last times*, wherein he applied that prophecy of St. Paul, (2 Tim. iii. 1.) *This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come*, to the mendicant orders and preachers of his time; and it was so severe a satyr upon the Dominicans, that pope Alexander IV. condemned it, as containing perverse sentiments, contrary to the power and authority of the Roman pontiff and of the other bishops, and in fine as a book capable of causing great scandals and troubles in the church. Robert Gosthead or Greathead, bishop of Lincoln, † in his speeches and writings inveighed bitterly against the corruption and superstition, the lewdness and wickedness of the clergy in general, and the rapacity and avarice, the tyranny and antichristianism of pope Innocent IV. in particular. He was also no less a friend to ‡ civil than to religious liberty, and ordered all the violators of Magna Charta, whosoever and wheresoever they were within his diocese, to be excommunicated. Matthew Paris, a contemporary historian, hath § related the substance of his dying discourses, wherein he proved the pope to be an heretic, and deservedly to be called Antichrist: and concludes with giving him the character of “refuter of the pope, reprover of prelates, corrector of monks, director of priests, instructor of the clergy, and in short the hammer to beat down the Romans and to bring them into contempt.” It is no marvel that such a man was excommunicated; but he || little regarded the cen-
sure

* Hist. Ecclesiast. Magdeburg. cent. XIII. cap. 10. p. 588. Edit. Basil. 1624. Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 7. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 9. Sect. 1.

† Vide cent. Magdeburg. Balæum. Dupin. Cave. Tanner. &c.

‡ Matt. Paris ad Ann. 1253. p. 874. Edit. Wats. 1646.

§ Matt. Paris. *ibid.* p. 876.

|| Excommunicatus appellavit a curia Innocentii ad tribunal Christi. Henr. de Knyghton. Lib. 2. inter Scriptores X. p. 2436.

sure, and appealed from the court of Innocent to the tribunal of Christ. Not to mention others, Matthew Paris himself hath painted in the most lively colours the corruptions and abominations of the see of Rome, the tyranny, superstition, simony, and wickedness of the popes and clergy. A protestant historian could not more freely lash and expose the vices of the times, than he did who was a monk of St. Albans.

As they are not all Israel which are of Israel; so neither have all the members of the Romish church believed all her doctrines. Dante and Petrarch, the former of whom died, and the latter was borne as well as died, in the *fourteenth* century, were * severe satirists upon the times, and wrote freely against the temporal dominion of the pope, and the corruptions of the clergy, treating Rome as Babylon, and the Pope as Antichrist: and they probably did more hurt to the court and church of Rome by their wit and raillery, than others by invective and declamation. Peter Fitz Cassiodor, whether a fictitious or a real person, † addressed a remonstrance to the church of England against the tyranny, avarice, and exactions of the court of Rome, advising and exhorting the English to shake off the Roman yoke from their necks. Michael Cæsenas and William Occam ‡ exposed the various errors and heresies of John XXII to the number of 77; and secure in the protection of the emperor, they set at nought the thunder of the pope's excommunications. Marsilius, a famous lawyer of Padua, § wrote a treatise intitled *the defender of peace*, wherein he advanced the power of the empe-

* Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. XIV. cap. 5. Sect. 8. et 9. Robertus Gerius & Henricus. Wharton in Appendice ad Cave Hist. Litt. p. 9 & 50.

† Appendix ad Cave. p. 10. Collier's Ecclesiast. Hist. B. 5. p. 301, &c.

‡ H. Wharton in Append. ad Cave. p. 20 & 28. Dupin. XIV. Siecle. chap. 5.

§ Wharton, ibid. p. 26, 27. Dupin. ibid. Chap. 5 & 8.

ror above that of the pope in things spiritual as well as temporal; painted in the strongest colours the pride, ambition, and luxury of the court of Rome; and abundantly proved that the pope had not by divine right the least authority or præminence over other bishops. It is no wonder that the author and his book were condemned together. But there were other and better witnesses than these in this age. It was shewn before from Thuanus, that the Waldenses and Albigenses being persecuted in their own country, fled for refuge into foreign nations, some into Germany, and some into Britain. In Germany they grew and multiplied so fast, notwithstanding the rage and violence of croisaders and inquisitors, that at the beginning of this century * it is computed, that there were eighty thousand of them in Bohemia, Austria, and the neighbouring territories; and they pertinaciously defended their doctrines even unto death. Among a variety of other names they were called *Lollards* from † one Walter Lollard, who preached in Germany about the year 1315 against the authority of the pope, the intercession of saints, the mass, extreme unction, and other ceremonies and superstitions of the church of Rome; and was burnt alive at Cologn in the year 1322. In England also they were denominated Lollards, tho' there was a man more worthy to have given name to the sect, the deservedly famous John Wickliff, the honour of his own, and the admiration of all succeeding times. Rector only of Lutterworth, he ‡ filled all England, and almost all Europe with his doctrine. He began to grow famous about the year 1360 by preaching and writing against the superstitions of the age, the tyranny of the pope, the erroneous doctrines and vicious lives of the monks and

* Bzovius ad Ann. 1315. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 6. Sect 1. Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 8.

† Dupin. *ibid.* Hoffmanni Lex. Spelman. Skinner. &c.

‡ H. Wharton in Append. ad Cave. p. 60, &c. Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 6. Leland, Bale, Tanner. &c. &c.

and the clergy ; and especially by defending the royal and ecclesiastical jurisdiction against the usurpations of the popes and mendicant friers. The more he opposed, the more reason he found for opposition. He translated the canonical scriptures into the English language, and wrote comments upon them. He demonstrated the antichristianity of popery, and the abomination of desolation in the temple of God. He asserted the one true sacrifice of Christ, and opposed the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, the adoration of the host, the seven sacraments, purgatory, prayers for the dead, the worship of saints and images, and in short all the principal corruptions and superstitions of the church of Rome. His success too was greater than he could have expected. The princes, the people, the university of Oxford, many even of the clergy, favoured and supported him, and embraced his opinions. His enemies have charged him with several heterodox notions ; but many years ago was published *An apology for John Wickliff, showing his conformity with the now church of England, &c. collected out of his written works in the Bodleian library by Thomas James keeper of the same, at Oxford 1608.* This truly great and good man died of a palsy the last day of the year 1387, but his doctrines did not die with him. His books were read in the public schools and colleges in Oxford, and were recommended to the diligent perusal of each student in the university, till they were condemned and prohibited by the council of Constance in the next century. His followers the Lollards in the year 1395 presented * a remonstrance to the parliament, which contained these with other articles ; that when the church of England began to mismanage her temporalities in conformity to the precedents of Rome, faith, hope, and charity began to take their leave of her communion ; that the

* Walsingham, Stow, Spelman, Collier's Eccles. Hist. B. 6. p. 596. &c.

English priesthood derived from Rome, and pretending to a power superior to angels, is not that priesthood which Christ settled upon his apostles; that in-joining celibacy to the clergy was the occasion of scandalous irregularities in the church; that the pretended miracle of transubstantiation runs the greatest part of christendom upon idolatry; that exorcisms and benedictions pronounced over wine, bread, water, the mitre, the cross, &c. have more of necromancy than religion in them; that prayer made for the dead is a wrong ground for charity and religious endowments; that pilgrimages, prayers and offerings, made to images and crosses, are near of kin to idolatry; that auricular confession makes the priests proud, lets them into the secrets of the penitent, gives opportunities for intrigues, and is attended with scandalous consequences, as well as the doctrine of indulgences; that the vow of single life undertaken by women in the church of England is the occasion of horrible disorders, &c. Some false tenets might be contained in the same remonstrance; for alas, who is there that holdeth the truth without any mixture or allay of error? They denied the infallibility of the pope, and they could not well pretend to be infallible themselves.

Two things contributed much to the revival of learning in the *fifteenth* century, the Greeks flying with their books from Constantinople which the Turks had taken, and the invention of printing. As learning more revived, so the truth prevailed more; and the more the truth prevailed, the fury of persecution increased in proportion. Wickliff himself had been permitted to die in peace; but after his death * his doctrines were condemned, his books were burnt, his very body was dug up and burnt too, by a decree of the council of Constance, and the command of pope Martin V. executed by Richard Fleming bishop of Lincoln. His followers however were not discouraged,

* Balæi Script. Brit. Cent. 6. N^o 1. H. Wharton in Append. ad Cave p. 63. Dupin, Collier, Tanner, &c.

raged, and many of them witnessed a good confession even unto death. William Sawtre, * hath the honour of being the first who was burnt for heresy in England ; which was done in the reign of Henry IV. at the beginning of this century. A few years afterwards Thomas Badby † was convicted of heresy, and also ordered to be burnt in Smithfield. Henry prince of Wales was present at his execution : and the poor man shewing very sensible signs of the torment he indured, the prince out of compassion commanded the fire to be removed, and promised him pardon and a pension for life, provided he would retract his errors. But Badby being come to himself, resolutely rejected this offer ; he chose rather to die with a good, than live with an evil conscience ; and so the fire was kindled again, and he was consumed to ashes. In the next reign Sir John Oldcastle, baron of Cobham † was prosecuted for being a principal patron and abettor of the Lollards. Being examined before the archbishop of Canterbury, he declared against transubstantiation, penances, the worshipping of the cross, the power of the keys ; and asserted that the pope was Antichrist and the head of that body, the bishops were the members, and the friars the hinder parts of the antichristian society. He was therefore pronounced a heretic convict, and delivered over to the secular power. But before the day fixed for his execution he escaped out of prison ; and being charged by his enemies with endeavoring to make an insurrection, he was outlawed for high treason ; and being taken afterwards, he was hanged as a traitor, and burnt hanging as an heretic, being the first nobleman in England who suffered death for the cause of religion. It was the great blot and stain of Henry the fifth's reign and character, that while he was

* Fox, Burnet's Hist. of the Ref. B. 1. Collier's Eccles. Hist. B. 7. p. 617. &c. Rapin. &c.

† Walsingham, Rapin, Collier *ibid.* p. 629. &c. &c.

† Walsingham, Rapin, Collier *ibid.* p. 632. &c. &c.

was carrying the glory of the English arms abroad, he was still persecuting the poor Lollards at home. But notwithstanding these persecutions, and the severest laws and proclamations against them, their numbers still increased, not only among the people, but even in parliament, not only in England but in foreign countries, and especially in Bohemia. For there * John Hufs and Jerome of Prague having received Wickliff's books, advanced and propagated the same doctrines; for which they were both condemned to the flames, and suffered death with the most heroic fortitude. It was a most unjust sentence, contrary to all faith and the solemn engagement of a safe conduct, and drew after it the most fatal consequences. For out of their ashes a civil war was kindled; the Bohemians revolted against the emperor, and maintained and defended their opinions by arms as well as by arguments. What the opinions generally received among the Bohemians were, we may learn with some exactness from one, who had opportunities of being well informed by living and conversing some time among them, and was far from being prejudiced in their favor, Æneas Sylvius, who being afterwards chosen pope assumed the name of Pius II. These then were † their opinions according to him, who, we may be certain, would not represent them better, if he would not represent them worse, than they were in reality.

‘ The pope of Rome is equal with other bishops.

‘ Among priests there is no difference; not dignity, but merit giveth preference.

‘ Souls departing out of bodies, are immediately either plunged into eternal punishments, or attain eternal joys.

‘ There is no purgatory fire,

‘ It

* Spanhemii Hist. Christian. Sæc. XV. cap. 6 & 7. Dupin. Siecle XV. chap. 7. Lenfant Hist. Conc. Pis. & Constance.

† Uffer de Christian. Eccles. successionē & statu. cap. 6. Sect. 16. Allix's remarks upon the ancient church of Piedmont. chap. 22. Æneas Sylv. Hist. Bohem. cap. 35.

‘ It is vain to pray for the dead, and an invention of priestly covetousness.

‘ The images of God and the saints ought to be destroyed.

The blessing of water and palm branches is ridiculous.

‘ The religion of the mendicants was invented by evil demons.

‘ Priests ought to be poor, content with alms alone.

‘ Every one hath free liberty to preach the word of God.

‘ No capital sin ought to be tolerated, although for the sake of avoiding a greater evil.

‘ He who is guilty of mortal sin ought not to enjoy any secular or ecclesiastical dignity, nor is he to be obeyed.

‘ Confirmation, which the bishops celebrate with anointing, and extreme unction, are by no means contained among the sacraments of the church.

‘ Auricular confession is trifling; it is sufficient for every one in his chamber to confess his sins unto God.

‘ Baptism ought to be celebrated without any mixture of holy oil.

‘ The use of church-yards is vain, invented for the sake of gain; in whatsoever ground human bodies are buried, it maketh no difference.

‘ The temple of the great God is the whole world; they confine his majesty, who build churches, monasteries, and oratories, as if the divine goodness would be found more propitious in them.

‘ Sacerdotal vestments, ornaments of altars, palls, corporals, chalices, patins and vessels of this sort are of no moment.

‘ A priest in any place, at any time can consecrate the body of Christ, and administer it to those who desire it; it is sufficient, if he repeat only the sacramental words.

‘ The suffrages of the saints reigning with Christ in heaven are implored in vain, forasmuch as they cannot help us.

‘ The

‘ The time is consumed in vain in singing and saying the canonical hours.

‘ We should cease from work on no day, except that which is now called the Lord’s day.

‘ The festivals of saints are altogether to be rejected.

‘ The fasts also instituted by the church have no merit in them.’

These were the opinions of the Bohemians or Hussites, for which they fought as well as disputed against the pope and emperor. At first they were victorious under the conduct of the famous John Ziska; and when they were beaten at last, they retired into the mountains and caves, where they continued distinguished by the name of *the Bohemian brethren* till the time of the Reformation. Even in the bosom of the church of Rome there were many good men, who called aloud for a reformation in faith as well as in morals, in doctrine as well as in discipline. One instance is more particularly worthy of our attention. Jeronimo Savonarola * was a Dominican, celebrated in all Italy, and especially in Florence, for the great purity and strictness of his life and doctrine. He preached freely against the vices of the age, the luxury, avarice, and debauchery of the Roman clergy in general, and the tyranny and wickedness in particular of pope Alexander VI. and his son Cæsar Borgia. In his discourses, sermons and writings, he pressed the necessity of holding a general council and of making a general reformation: and he wrote particularly a treatise † intitled *The lamentation of the spouse of Christ against false apostles, or an exhortation to the faithful that they would pray unto the Lord for the renovation of the church.*

* Spanhem. *ibid.* cap. 5. Sect. 3. H. Wharton in *Append. ad Cave* p. 198. &c. Guicciardin. B. 3. toward the end. Phil. de Comines. B. 8. chap. 19. Dupin. *ibid.* chap. 4. Bayle’s *Dict.* &c. &c.

† Venet. 1537. et cum vita Savonarolæ. Paris 1674, 8 vo. Wharton *ibid.*

church. But what was the fruit and consequence of all his pious zeal? he was excommunicated, he was imprisoned, he was tortured, he was burnt; which he suffered with all possible constancy on the 23d of May 1498, and in the 46th year of his age. All persons of any note and eminence bear a double character in the world, and so doth Savonarola, his admirers extolling him as the best of men and the prophet of God, his enemies reviling him as the worst of impostors and hypocrits; but if his works may speak for him, they are, in the * opinion of Dupin, "full of grace and of maxims of piety; he speaketh freely there against the vices, and teacheth the most pure and the most exalted morality."

We are now arrived at the *sixteenth* century, *seculum reformatum* as it hath been called, or the age of reformation. The materials had in great measure been collected, and the foundations had been laid deep before, but this age had the happiness of seeing the superstructure raised and completed. All the christian world almost had groaned earnestly for a reformation: and pope Adrian himself † acknowledged the necessity of it, and promised to begin with reforming the court of Rome, as the source and origin of evil. Erasmus and others led the way; and Luther began ‡ publicly to preach against the pope's indulgences in the year 1517, which is usually reckoned the æra of the reformation. So that during all the dark ages of popery, from the first rise of the beast down to the Reformation, there have constantly been some true and faithful *witnesses* of Jesus Christ, who, tho' they may have fallen into some errors and mistakes, (as indeed who is altogether free from them?) yet it may charitably be presumed, held none which are contrary to the fundamentals of the christian faith, and destructive

* Dupin. *ibid.*

† Sleidan's Hist. of the reformation. B. 4. Father Paul's Hist. of the Council of Trent. B. 1. Sect. 60.

‡ Sleidan. B. 1. Father Paul. B. 1. Sect. 18, &c.

tive of salvation. Many more there were without doubt than have come to our knowledge; many more might have been collected, and this deduction drawn out into a greater length: but I have studied brevity as much as I well could; and they who are desirous of seeing a larger and more particular account of *the witnesses* may find it in * Flaccius Illyricus, in the centuriators of Magdeburg, in Uffer, in Allix, in Spanheim, and other authors. Here only some of the principal instances are selected: but this deduction, short and defective as it is, evidently demonstrates however, that there hath not been that uninterrupted union and harmony, which the members of the church of Rome pretend and boast to have been before the Reformation: and at the same time it plainly evinces, that they betray great ignorance, as well as impertinence, in asking the question *Where was your religion before Luther?* Our religion, we see, was in the hearts and lives of many faithful witnesses; but it is sufficient, if it was no where else, that it was always in the Bible. “The Bible, as Chillingworth † says, the Bible only is the religion of protestants.”

15 And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God almighty, which art and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee the great power, and hast reigned.

18 And

* Matthias Flaccius in Catalogo testium veritatis. Hist. Ecclesiast. Magdeburg. Uffer de Christian. Eccles. successione & statu. Allix's remarks upon the ancient church of Piedmont, and the ancient churches of the Albigenfes. Frederici Spanhemii Hist. Christiana & Hist. Imaginum.

† Chillingworth's religion of Protestants, chap. 6. Sect. 56.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.

At the sounding of the seventh trumpet (ver. 15.) *the third woe* commenceth, which is rather implied than expressed, as it will be described more fully hereafter. *The third woe* brought on the inhabitants of the earth is the ruin and downfall of the Antichristian kingdom: and then, and not till then, according to the heavenly chorus, *the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* St. John is rapt and hurried away as it were to a view of the happy millenium, without considering the steps preceding and conducting to it. At the same time *the four and twenty elders*, or the ministers of the church, ver. (16, 17, 18.) are represented as praising and glorifying God for manifesting his *power and kingdom* more than he had done before: and gave likewise an intimation of some succeeding events, as *the anger of the nations*, Gog and Magog, (xx. 8.) and *the wrath of God*, displayed in their destruction, (xx. 9.) and *the judging of the dead*, or the general judgment, (xx. 12.) and *the rewarding of all the good, small and great*, as well as *the punishing of the wicked*. Here we have only a summary account of the circumstances and occurrences of the seventh trumpet, but the particulars will be dilated and enlarged upon hereafter.

And thus are we arrived at the consummation of all things, through a series of prophecies extending from the apostle's days to the end of the world. It is this series which has been our clue to conduct us in our interpretation of these prophecies: and tho' some of them may be dark and obscure, considered in themselves, yet they receive light and illustration from others

others preceding and following. All together they are as it were a chain of prophecies, whereof one link depends on, and supports another. If any parts remain yet obscure and unsatisfactory, they may perhaps be cleared up by what the apostle himself hath added by way of explanation.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



